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Herbauch

THE
HEAVENLY HOME;

OR,

THE EMPLOYMENTS AND ENJOYMENTS

OF

The Saints in Heaven.

BY
REV. H. HARBAUGH, A.M.,

AUTHOR OF

"HEAVEN; OR, THE SAINTED DEAD," AND "THE HEAVENLY RECOGNITION."

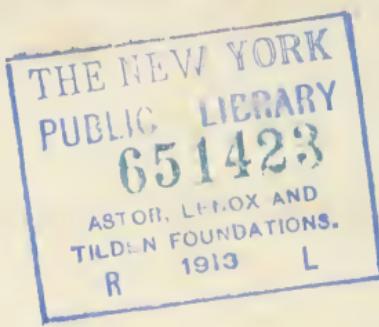
In my Father's house are many mansions.
JESUS.

Come to this happy land,
Come, come away!
Why will ye doubting stand?
Why thus delay?

CHILD'S HYMN.

PHILADELPHIA:
LINDSAY & BLAKISTON.

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TO

JAMES F. LINN, ESQ.,

THE DISINTERESTED FRIEND OF MY YOUTHFUL MINISTRY;

WHO, AMID THE DUTIES OF

AN HONORABLE EARTHLY PROFESSION,

MAINTAINS, THEOLOGICALLY AND PRACTICALLY,

A DEEP INTEREST IN

THE HIGHER AND MORE PEACEFUL THEMES

WHICH PERTAIN TO

THE LIFE EVERLASTING,

THIS VOLUME IS

Gratefully Dedicated.

P R E F A C E.

THIS Volume, though separately complete, is nevertheless part of a general plan which the Author has pursued in treating on the Future Life. Two volumes—the first entitled “Heaven ; or an Earnest and Scriptural Inquiry into the Abode of the Sainted Dead,” and the second, “The Heavenly Recognition ; or an Earnest and Scriptural Discussion of the Question, Will we Know our Friends in Heaven ?”—have already been published. The Heavenly Home here follows in order, and concludes what the author has designed to contribute to this interesting department of pious inquiry—the fruits of seven years’ attention to this subject.

These themes have not been treated without a special and definite aim, even beyond the general desire of promoting the interests of individual piety and comfort. While this has been kept steadily in view, it has always been in connection with what we consider the wider and deeper wants of the age. We believe that there is, in the piety of our age, a momentous tendency to mere naturalism. The “powers of the world to come” do not enter into

and affect our piety as they ought to do. We are not conscious, as we should be, of our nearness to unseen, supernatural, and eternal realities. Hence, instead of reverence, we have boldness ; instead of humility, presumption ; instead of quietude of spirit, restlessness ; instead of faith, individual notions and opinions ; instead of love, distractions ; instead of hope, mere fitful spasms of desire ; and instead of the life of a higher world, dwelling in us by grace, and bearing us on to glory, we have become the unhappy subjects of mere influences.

We do not sufficiently feel the great fact that all which belongs to this life of grace is but the “example and shadow of heavenly things,” and “the pattern of things in the heavens.” We practically forget that yonder, and there alone, is the true substance — the glorious and eternal consummation ! We forget that faith is *not* faith, unless it rests upon things supernatural and unseen in its deepest ground. We have individual notions, opinions, views, and speculations in abundance ; but if the Son of man should come, would He find *faith* upon the earth ?—faith which treads upon the world in every form, overcomes its fashion, its follies, its promises, its profits, and counts them all but loss !—faith which fastens, roots, and grounds our whole life in the unseen and supernatural ; and which leads us to view this world, with all its pretensions, as but the scaffolding of a temporary tabernacle, which in due time shall be taken away to reveal the fair and faultless proportions of a temple eternal in the heavens.

May we not ask whether the very progress of modern natural science, which is the cause of all our earthly conveniences, and which, if rightly used, leads us toward God, has not, by a prostitution to mere carnal ends, had a tendency to cause men to deify human reason, to enthrone intellect, to overrate man's natural powers, to flatter his pride, to seek the satisfaction of mere temporal wants, and thus practically to forget the momentous interests and claims of a future and higher world? Behold for a moment the busy whirl of earth, the rush and rivalry of the multitudes in pursuit of the mere interests of time, even to the secularization of holy seasons and places, and then say whether the subduing powers of another life are felt as they should be.

We believe, moreover, that one great cause — perhaps the fundamental one — of the divisions, distractions, bickerings and bitterness, which afflict the religious world so sorely at this time, is this same evil tendency. Nothing can have a greater influence in making us quiet, humble, and peaceable, than the deep consciousness that the powers of a supernatural world are hanging over us! — that we are really surrounded by a cloud of spiritual witnesses — and that we are come, even in the church on earth, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant. How can we but be meek, peaceable, and quiet in love, when we feel that the eyes of

such an host, from behind a thin veil, are upon us ! Christians will cease to look jealously around, crying to each other in sectional strife, *mine*, — *thine*, when they are once all attracted by the flood of glory which dawns down from the higher world, and induced to exclaim together, OURS ! OURS !

The Church needs to be reminded that the Saviour's discourse, which precedes that intercessory prayer in which occurs the petition, "That they all may be one," begins with the declaration, "In my Father's house are many mansions." O, that intercessory prayer ! "Jesus lifted up His eyes to Heaven!" — and the whole prayer is full of holy longings for the union of all saints in the hopes of that higher world, till it closes with the divine desire, that all His own may be with Him where He is, that they may behold His glory.

The church must return to her peaceful themes. No one must venture to give laws to his brother who has not been in this mount, in deep communion with God, until his face has shone with the holy light and love of Heaven. Individual Christians must call to mind, that they are but reflectors of the heavenly light, not sources ; and, instead of presuming to make the world wise in their own wisdom, they must point to heaven and cry, Behold the true light: walk in it. As all objects that are bright on earth are so in the light of the same sun, so will all Christians reflect one glory if they all bask in the same light from above.

We may be permitted to quote, as exactly expressing our views on this point, the words of Bax-

ter, in his Introduction to Howe's *Blessedness of the Righteous*: "It is a happy sign that God is about to repair our ruins and divisions, when he stirreth up his servants to speak so much of Heaven, and to call up the minds of impatient complainers, and contentious censurers, and ignorant self-conceited dividers, and of worldly, unskilful, and unmerciful pastors, to look to that state where all the godly shall be one."

Besides all this, earth can only have true life under the influence of Heaven. As nature, when the heavens are for a length of time hidden by clouds, so that the sun does not dawn upon the earth, is chilled, and loses its vigor and loveliness, so it is in grace—it is the influence of the supernatural and heavenly which gives true life, love, and beauty to our piety.

Separate, however, from all these considerations, it is not to be conceived that an heir of that better world should not take a deep interest in all that pertains to it. There is everything to incite us to it. This life is unsatisfying and transient; that world is so often held up to our hopes in the Scriptures, almost all the Saviour's parables and teachings referring to it—it lies in so sweet a contrast with this in every point—all our best friends are already there—it is to be our own Heavenly Home eternally—and it lies already so near us! How can it be otherwise than that our minds and hearts should be deeply interested in an inquiry which so widely and so solemnly affects us?

With regard to the manner in which the subject

is treated in this Volume, we would merely say in general that we have sought to avoid two extremes. On the one hand, we have endeavored to avoid that vague, indefinite hortatory, figurative cantation, which is common in a certain class of practical treatises, and which, however pleasant it may be to a certain class of Christians, is not, we believe, either profitable or satisfactory to earnest minds and hearts. On the other hand, we have with equal diligence sought to avoid those wild and bold speculations, which, however much they may delight the itching ears of the curious, have in them too much of the wisdom of this world to serve the purposes of true piety, and have, to reverent minds, at least the appearance of being profane. We have aimed at combining into one, the authority of revelation, the definiteness of science, and the tenderness of devotion.

With humble gratitude to God for the favor which former volumes on the same general subject have received, the Author commends this also to God, and to all earnest minds and hearts. Go forth peaceably, ye fruits of many anxious, but pleasant hours! — And Thou, Blessed Mediator, in whose name all things must be done, if Thou wilt bless these meditations to the refreshment and consolation of the saints, then those saints will praise Thee—as we do now!

LANCASTER CITY, *May 28, 1853.*

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THE
HEAVENLY HOME.

CHAPTER I.

Heavenly Undertones in the Spirit.

Then woke
Stirrings of deep Divinity within,
And, like the flickerings of a smouldering flame,
Yearnings of a hereafter. Thou it was,
When the world's din, and passion's voice was still,
Calling thy wanderer home.

WILLIAMS.

THERE reposes deep in the human spirit the idea of the perfect. Amid the sense of our own imperfection, and the sight of imperfection in all that surrounds us, there is the deep intuitive conviction that there exists somewhere the infinitely Pure, the infinitely Beautiful, and the infinitely Good. Often, when the spirit lingers lonely and meditative among the wrecks of earthly hope, and feels as if it could no more cling to things which perish, it is drawn, by a sweet attraction, made up of faith, hope, and love, into a far-off silent world of peace, purity, and perfection. Beneath our sense of guilt, beneath those monitions which chide us as wanderers, beneath the confusion and collision of

sense, of sin, and of sorrow, are heard, in soft "mournfully pleasant" undertones, the harmonies of higher, holier, and happier realms. There is, at such times, a growing weary of present things, and things that are seen; and the spirit longs after an outlet from that which is "in part," and an inlet into that communion where "that which is in part shall be done away."

This feeling, which manifests itself with such mournful earnestness among thoughtful pagans, as well as among thoughtful sinners in Christian lands, is almost infinitely stronger and clearer in the bosom of Christians. Christianity brings the true meaning of life, and the true value of immortality, to light. It reveals the Pure, the Beautiful, the Good. It strengthens the longings of the spirit after the infinite and the perfect. It begets in the heart that hidden life of faith which is the substance of things hoped for, and which, coming from God, leads back to Him. Though in this contracted sphere of earth we are often almost overwhelmed with worldliness, yet

"Still in the soul sounds the deep underchime,
Of some immeasurable, boundless time."

Christians cannot be better characterized than they are when it is said, "They declare plainly that they seek a country." As soon as our lives are brought under the power of faith, we thenceforth walk by faith, and not by sight. Faith is now the life of heaven dawning in the soul. It works by love—love beaming from heaven into the heart, warming it into a joyful bloom, as the rays of the sun unfold and

beautify the flowers. It purifies the heart by the spirit of purity, which comes from heaven. It overcomes the world, by its ardent longings after the high, the good, the infinite. Faith is that hidden life which has affinities for the unseen; to which things unseen are more real, and far more powerful in their influence, than those things which stand in direct affinity with the senses. Hence the life of a Christian, being a life of faith, is a heavenly life. Earth, with its scenes, is still around him, it is true, laving his senses; but even these, in their inner sense, are heavenly to him; not stopping, in their influence, with the senses, but using them only as channels to the spirit. The senses are but as the convolutions of a smooth-lipped shell, which winds gradually and gracefully into the inner life; and, as there are hidden chambers in the shell, which return sweet music to the ear, so there are "holy of holies" in the spirit, which speak a language of their own to the ear of faith. That awful retirement gives back echoes of which the senses are the channels, but which the senses do not understand. These are the echoes of the universe!

In some hour of solemn jubilee,
The massy gates of Paradise are thrown
Wide open, and forth come, in fragments wild,
Sweet echoes of unearthly melodies,
And odors snatched from beds of amaranth,
And they that from the crystal river of life
Spring up on freshened wing, ambrosial gales!
The favored good man in his lonely walk
Perceives them, and his silent spirit drinks
Strange bliss, which he shall recognize in heaven.

COLERIDGE.

These are harmonies which undulate over from choirs afar off. This is that heavenly jubilate, which, when once heard, the music of earth can please no longer.

Thus the spirit of the Christian is brought, by faith, into communion with the life of heaven—a life

Which only he who feels it knows!

This communion is designated in Scripture by such passages as these: The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. In thy light shall we see light. Your life is hid with Christ in God. Ps. xxv. 14: xxxvi. 9. Col. iii. 3. Rev. ii. 17. Heb. xii. 22. Phil. iii. 20. 1 Cor. vi. 17: ii. 9, 10, 14. 1 John, ii. 20. Matt. xi. 25. Luke, xvii. 20, 21. Let these passages be studied by him whose life is in this world, and who sees, feels, and enjoys only through his senses. O, such an one lives but in the cold outer darkness of life, and will sooner or later perish there!

When we consider that language like the above finds its deep and blessed fulfilment in the experience of God's believing children, is it strange that they meditate much and earnestly on the heavenly life, and long ardently after its full fruition? "Now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly." Would they be Christians if they did not? Could they be heirs, and not long after their inheritance? Could they be children, and not think of their Father's house? Could they have the dawn of heaven rising in their souls, without desiring to bask in the full light and love of the eternal day? May we not safely

measure our interest in that blissful place by the strength of our desire after it?

It is well worthy of serious inquiry whether the piety of the times has not too little of heaven in it. We venture to say that the religion of the present day is too much the fruit of the impulsive, and not sufficiently of the attractive. It resembles a plant that is developed under the pressure of the hot-bed, and not in the genial light and warmth of the sun. It seeks too much to woo heaven, and yields too little to being wooed by it. It depends too much upon efforts of feeling and intellect, and has too little of surrender, submission, and dedication. It lacks the meek, the quiet, the serene, the child-like, and the patriarchal. Its faith has too much self-will, because it has too little hope and love in it. It is too secular, and conforms too much to worldly wisdom and prudence. The affections circle too much amid the subjective and earthly, and acknowledge practically too little the silent, attractive, transforming power of the objective and heavenly. There is too much of a tendency toward making heaven a mere subject of feeling in the soul, without regarding it also as an object of hope, toward which we are directed to look for full and final satisfaction. That region of rest and peace into which this life, if it is a life in Christ, is at length to merge, is too much ignored, just as if earth could be bright without light from above. We need more of that old faith, which felt a nearer fellowship with the world of spirits than is done now —the faith that boasted less of spiritualism in market-places and at the corners of the streets, but which

was more really under the influence of spiritual powers—that faith which walked less by sight, but bowed more reverently in the holy shadow of mysteries—that faith, in short, which was faith only because it was the evidence of things *not seen*!

Man is a mysterious being, fearfully and wonderfully made. He stands as the medium of two worlds. Being constituted of body and soul, he is partly matter and partly spirit. In him, therefore, heaven and earth, time and eternity, the finite and the infinite, meet and exchange their sympathies.

Being thus marvellously constituted, he has capacities which adapt him to the intercourse of both worlds, and enables him even on earth to comprehend in part both worlds in himself. By his senses and intellect he is planted into a living union with the present world, and by the higher faculties of his spirit, he stands in affinity with the unseen spirit-world. As the Angel of the Apocalypse stood, with one foot upon the land, and with the other upon the sea, so he rests with one side of his being in the seen, and with the other in the unseen world, looks forward and backward at pleasure, and is, or ought to be, at home in both.

From different natures marvellously mix'd,
Connexion exquisite of distant worlds !
Distinguished link in being's endless chain !
Midway from nothing to the Deity !

From each side of this mysterious line in man, which is at once the centre and division of his nature, voices are heard, and objects press upon him, soliciting his attention. Each side presents wonders, interests,

and claims. Heaven calls to him from above, and earth from beneath and around. On the earthly side are things seen and temporal, which address themselves to the senses of the body, and which urge their importance by promises of present and immediate reward. From the spiritual and eternal side appear God, Christ, the Spirit, angels, and sainted human spirits, together with all the earnest realities of an endless life. In which direction, under these circumstances, ought man most earnestly to look? From which side has he most to hope or to fear? Both reason and revelation at once decide,—“We look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

Want of that solemn sense of unseen things which inspires humble reverence, and want of that sweet sense of unseen things which inspires joyful love, we believe to be also among the prominent faults of the religion of this age. We have been *receding*, unconsciously, perhaps, but surely, from the silent world of spirits! We do not, as we might do, feel the animating beat of unseen life; nor hear, as faith may do, whispers from the eternal side. As geography has set farther out the ends of the earth, and as astronomy has shown us the heavenly regions at a greater distance, so theology, both theoretical and practical, has repelled to a cold distance the warm sympathies of the future life; or, rather, has withdrawn from it.

A certain philosophy, which has a phase for every theological latitude, and which is therefore to be met, in one or other of its forms, in every branch of the

Church, has assumed to itself the heartless mission of severing the kingdom of Christ from its connections with the mysteries on which it rests on one side. In this way superstition has been destroyed, it is true, but at what an expense! Reason has become ashamed of faith; and though it has not in every case determined to dissociate itself entirely from faith, it has, nevertheless, presumed to change its position in relation to it. It now proposes to go before, and to lead, faith; and in so far as the claims which reason arrogates to itself of leading faith, have been acknowledged, has faith given way to intellect, notion, and opinion, which hide the solemn mysteries of the spirit-world from view. The loss which piety has sustained from this tendency is immense. The more reason, outside of faith and revelation, has sought to think clearly, the more has it thought coldly.

Vague and floating ideas of heaven, are, on the other hand also, sure to weaken faith, and are ever followed by an unsteady religious life. It is like sailing with no port in view. Cross-tides will be constantly bearing us out of the course, and mist will enshroud us. If we would go steadily forward, we must lay definite and firm "hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus."

The prominence which a false philosophy has given to reason, and to the merely outward in our nature, has done much to crowd out of view those deep mysteries with which faith and our inner nature commune.

The sense of the infinite in the spirit has become dull. The world has become so noisy that the soft undertones from the realms of spirits are no more heard as they should be. Worldliness, both in its refined and vulgar forms, has banished that lovely piety which only blooms where heaven is ever felt to be near, and where there is constant communion with the solemn silent unseen.

In addition to this we would suggest, whether another reason why there is so little of the silent but powerful life of heaven in our present piety, may not be found in a certain sort of sermons and practical writings. The heaven which is often delineated with spiritualistic zeal, is not the heaven of the Bible. It is represented as being such a sublimated—we will not say place, for amid the fashion of the times it is almost heresy to speak of it as a place—it is described as such a sublimated and ethereal state, so purely spiritual, so abstracted and removed from all the sympathies of the present life, that it must seem, to conscientious hearts, almost profane to claim a present fellowship with it! Practically, Christians are taught that the heavenly life is so entirely unlike this, and that it is to be entered by such a violent transition, that the proper position of an expectant is, publican-like, to stand afar off, and not even so much as turn his eyes towards the place, for fear of polluting it with his glance. There seems to be an effort made to cast an air of strangeness around it, which cuts off all those warm attenuations by which it reaches over so lovingly into this life, and makes us feel that there is our home—that there is our Father's house, with its familiar

home-like scenes, and not the cold ivory hall of a strange king, which we dread to enter. Instead of these cold abstractions, and things purely spiritual, for which an embodied being can have no other feelings but those of terror, we need a reviving of those Fatherland feelings, which will enable us to approach our heavenly inheritance like children long absent going home; and not like aliens that are seeking protection, and suing for a reward of services at a foreign court.

The scriptures do not in the least favor that sublimated spiritualism which, in its zeal for spirit, forgets the body and its sympathies, and makes the home that we hope for as unfamiliar, and as far removed from our present sympathies, as possible. It is just the reverse. In the Scripture it is not a strange land to which we go; it is going home. It is a return to our Father's house. It is an entering upon the inheritance to which we are heirs. Sabbath and sanctuary scenery, the most familiar of all that is mirrored in our associations, is spread out over the land of our hopes, to make it home-like. To be in heaven, is to sit down at table with patriarchs and ancient saints—it is to come to the general assembly and church of the first-born—it is to walk forth in company with the Lamb—it is to repose, as children, upon the bosom of God; and, with his own hands, to have all tears wiped from our eyes.

How far is all this removed from those abstract disquisitions, which labor, in learned pain, to show how much that fatherland will be foreign to all our present conceptions and feelings of it! We venture the assertion, that those Christians who are deepest and most

child-like in their piety, have the most home-like ideas of heaven ; and that those who associate with it most of that scenery which belongs to the holiest associations of earth, are nearest the truth. Before the hopes of such, it lies in the most familiar attractiveness ; and journeying towards it seems to them like returning, after long absence, to the home of their childhood.

These conceptions of heaven, which, as we have seen, are favored by the general habit of scripture, are those also which best harmonize with the deep undertones of the spirit. We find them, accordingly, prevailing everywhere in that portion of the history of the human spirit lying anterior to that pride of reason which spurns the child-like and traditionary as the mere images of superstition and ignorance. The heaven of pagan longings, however false their views in other respects may have been, as compared with revelation, was a place like this world, only all was perfect. The Jewish heaven was a Paradise, and a land of inheritance, only infinitely lovelier than Eden or Canaan. Even the heaven of which the Saviour and his disciples speak — for they never speak as philosophers — is a place where he, and all his, shall be together as they were on earth ; and the spirituality of the place consists in complete holiness of soul and body, not in a suspension of the present laws of holy activity in the one, or in the abrogation of all materiality in the other. The same ideas of heaven are found to breathe in the yearnings of childhood, and amid the simple faith of those humble souls who receive the kingdom of heaven as little children. Reason, in all its pride, can find no heaven so lovely,

so congenial, and so true, as the one which is whispered to the feelings and to faith in the undertones of the spirit.

Who will say that it is the mission of our more logical and philosophical theology to ignore these prophecies of simple faith, which have such evident fulfilment in every intimation of our future home given in the Scriptures? That we see "*in part*," and know in part, is no proof that we see *wrong*, and know wrong. If Christianity must be philosophical, let it explain the nature of those yearnings in the heart, which seek to interpret themselves by means of revelation. Let it occupy itself with those mysterious adumbrations and out-reachings of the spirit, which render a revelation to it possible. Let it explain, not deny. Let it interpret what is at hand, not theorize. As the living Word had to become flesh, and thus a revelation *in* our nature, before it could become a revelation *to us*, so the revelations of the Scripture must be in us, before they can be to us. Revelation must interpret, not destroy, what adumbrations it finds in the spirit. Hence, however much reason may fall short of revelation, there can be no disagreement between the yearnings of the spirit, as exhibited in simple traditional faith, and revelation itself. This traditional faith may come short of truth, but cannot contradict it. These yearnings of the spirit, which are, in the order of time, before revelation, and which make a revelation needed, desired, and possible, are a true prophecy of what that revelation will be; they are the type of what is real, and to come. They may need to be corrected, but neither changed nor destroyed.

We shall endeavor, in the following pages, while we seek to interpret the Scriptures, not to ignore or contradict the yearnings of the human spirit; but as Adam, though fallen, still recognized the voice of his maker, and answered to it, so shall we expect to hear a correct response to the voice of revelation from heaven, in those mysterious undertones in us, which, while they alone make revelation possible, make it also intelligible, and become themselves intelligible in its light. We shall reprove reason and philosophy, as being falsely so called, whenever they seek to ignore, instead of directing, the yearnings of the heart. In the same sense as "the child is father to the man," are the yearnings of simple traditional faith, parent to that wisdom which is the ripe fruit of revelation. As man, in ripe age, cannot ignore his childhood, and the influences which then moulded his spirit, so it is not possible for the faith that lives in the full light of revelation, to set aside the faith of previous traditional yearnings. Not the proud deductions of reason, whether Christian or pagan, but the earnest undertones of the spirit, are the whispers of heaven.

These observations may serve to explain the reasons why we introduce a chapter on pagan ideas of happiness in a future life. With the cries and yearnings of the heathen ringing in our ears—with a full picture of what they want and seek after before us, we shall be best prepared to inquire after that which will fully satisfy the demands of needy spirits; and that we will be sure to find revealed in the Scriptures. As we bestow not general charities upon the beggar, but determine our gift by his implorings, so God holds out

to groaning humanity, not such abstract generalities as we might conceive of, however perfect, not such a land of hope as reason fashions, but that heaven which answers congenially to the groanings and travailings in pain ~~in~~ those on whom revelation has not yet fully dawned. These sighings of the prisoners come up before God; and it is these that he answers in what he say of heaven in the Scriptures. As old age, when it has eached the end of all wisdom, returns again to its ch lhood, and cons over with new delight what it once eated as puerile, so the wisdom of the world, when it has run through the whole length of what it once regarded as its mighty argument, must go back again and seek the beginnings of all wisdom in those childlike, instinctive traditionaly longings, which are the key to all revealed truth. Coleridge has truly said, "the deepest lore is the simplest and most universal;" and a greater than he has said, "Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

O that we could—in this sordid age, when religious feelings have become on the one hand profanely secular, and on the other so etherealized as to be but unsubstantial spiritual abstractions—add but a mite toward the restoration of that ancient and venerable piety whose roots are faith, whose branches are hope, whose flowers and fruits are love—faith resting on the unseen, hope reaching after the unseen, and love embracing the unseen. O that we could serve but feebly, in bringing back the older faith in mysteries present, as well as to come—mysteries around us and in us, as well as above us and before us! Then would our piety,

now so well at home on earth, be waked to infinite longings; and our spirits would be always hearing, beneath the din and confusion of earth, an underchime from spiritual realms calling the wanderer home. Then would every thought of heaven bring to the heart that sweet mysterious feeling which so strangely draws our spirits into the infinite, when we hear the plaintive cooing of the dove on a summer evening, listen to the soft notes of distant music, or gaze towards the mild stars when they seem buried in the sea of infinite purity above us.

Such feelings would we awaken in the heart of the one who reads this book. It is not our desire to speak as a master, but only as a monitor. We desire to beget feelings rather than thoughts; or rather we would awaken feelings that shall beget thoughts. We desire to speak *in* the heart, rather than *to* it. We would lead the reader in a path, where he need only pay enough attention to the guide to follow him, while the scenery that is around shall take up all his thoughts. We desire him to think of what we say, only that he may be led to think of a thousand other things which we do not say. It is, in short, through the undertones of his own spirit that we would speak to him. We will be content if our thoughts may become to him that cooing dove, that distant music, those lonely stars, which shall awaken his spirit to longings after the infinite—the infinitely pure, beautiful, and good.

The appropriate words of Mrs. Jameson, used in reference to another subject, we here adopt as our own. “Like a child that has sprung on a little way before

its playmates, and caught a glimpse through an open portal of some varied Eden within, all gay with flowers, and musical with birds, and haunted by divine shapes which beckon forward; and, after one rapturous survey, runs back and catches its companions by the hand, and hurries them forward to share the new-found pleasure, the yet unexplored region of delight; even so it is with me—I am on the outside, not the inside, of the door I open."

CHAPTER II.

Pagan Ideas of Heavenly Happiness.

In such a world, so thorny, and where none
Finds happiness unblighted, or, if found,
Without some thistle sorrow at its side ;
It seems the part of wisdom, and no sin
Against the law of love, to measure lots
With less distinguished than ourselves ; that thus
We may with patience bear our moderate ills,
And sympathize with others suff'ring more.

COWPER.

THE future world, with all its living glories, lies beyond the reach of the senses. We cannot see its objects, hear its music, or in any way, by the senses, touch its realities. It is not, therefore, through the medium of the sensual side of our nature that we can converse with the mysteries of another life.

The light of reason is equally inadequate to so great a task. Reason, like the cold moon, revolves only around the earth, and shines but with a reflected light. It can move only in its own orbit, which is an intellectual one ; of the mysteries of faith it can know nothing, until it becomes itself the subject of its operations. It only shines after it is shone upon.

We can, therefore, know nothing, intellectually and

definitely, of another life, until we are informed by illuminations that come from the other side of the material veil. The heathen, consequently, who have lived out of the range of heavenly communications, except so far as these reached them in vague traditions, have been in the dark in regard to the nature of another life. They reasoned, but at the grave, or at that awful verge which divides the seen and unseen, their empirical investigations were abruptly lost in dark uncertainty. Their yearning spirits, in attempting to penetrate these mysteries, fluttered against the veil which hides them, and beat it till their wings were weary, and then descended again into the sphere of sense and of cold abstractions, from which they had started. Only that which comes from God and eternity can lead back to them. As the mist which rises from the earth floats awhile cloudily in the air, and then seeks earth's bosom again, so the aspirations of the heathen after another life soon returned to their source. As the world by wisdom knew not God, so it did not know the eternity in which He dwells. As the gods of the heathen were but fragmentary and shadowy ideas concerning the true God, so their ideas of the future life were but dark adumbrations of the blessed reality.

It is true the spirits of the heathen were so constituted—as the spirits of all men are—as constantly and earnestly to sigh after another life, as an exile in a strange land sighs for his home; yet they could not tell, with certainty, whether that for which they longed was not a mere dream of the heart, a cheat of some malignant spirit, who would flatter to disappoint, or

whether it originated perhaps in a capricious or wicked dissatisfaction with their present lot. Hope, enkindled by floating traditions, rather than faith, recognized faintly a better life beyond the tears of this; but this hope was sadly clouded by fears that it might prove a hope which was led on to disappointment by a pleasant lie. There was a capacity in the spirit for sympathy with the unseen and infinite, but having no objective revelations to give certainty to its aspirations, their own thoughts and feelings, wakened to hope by some floating traditions, served only to darken and confuse the earnest and mysterious longings of their nature. Without was mystery, and within were fears. Often did they, stirred by the deep wants of their hearts, adopt the belief in another life, and as often again they first doubted, then denied, and at last cast it away as a vexatious delusion. “He holdeth back the face of his throne, and spreadeth his cloud upon it.”

As in the natural world it gives us pleasure to look towards the hopeful orient, and see how the dawn of morning passes into day; so, in the spiritual history of our race, it is interesting to trace all the better things which we now enjoy, back into the grey twilight of the world’s morning, when the human spirit spake as a child, understood as a child, and thought as a child. It will also serve to lead us more livingly into the substance of those blessed truths of revelation which we propose, in this volume, to exhibit; for no subject can be fully understood except in its history—its history is a commentary on it. Moreover, we can only fully appreciate the value of divine revelation, after we see how the world has stumbled in the dark without it.

It is only after we have walked in a dark and dreary night, with nothing to guide us but "reason's feeble ray," that we can feel the beautiful force of the expression: "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sun." We propose, therefore, as preparatory to what shall follow, to give an exhibition of the ideas of future happiness as they are found among pagans of all ages and all lands.

SECTION I.

ALL PAGANS HAVE HAD SOME IDEA OF HEAVENLY HAPPINESS.

As the belief of the soul's immortality was a very ancient tradition, so also was the collateral doctrine of rewards and punishments. If it was believed that the virtuous would be rewarded hereafter, it was also necessary to believe that some particular place would be assigned them, prepared for that purpose, where these rewards would be bestowed. As ideas are always very indefinite in the childhood of nations, the minds of the ancient pagans were long satisfied with the most vague and general ideas of the place of departed men. As among the early Hebrews, where the doctrine of immortality was more fully known, they for a long time spoke of the dead in the most general way, as having been gathered to their fathers, as gone to Sheol, out of sight; so, among pagans, it was for a long time the traditional style of speaking of the dead as having gone to the gods. As to where the gods dwelt, they did not closely question their minds.

Later, however, when the more logical and philosophical training of their minds required their ideas to become more definite, they began to speculate as to the home of the gods, and the place of happiness reserved for the good after this life. As their minds were earthly, they, for the most part, located the heaven of the good upon the earth; associating in their minds, with these abodes, all kinds of earthly ideas, and adorning them with earthly drapery. Since their knowledge of the face of the earth was limited, and since there were still around them many undiscovered solitudes and unexplored seas, there was abundant room for the imagination to locate these happy abodes, and of surrounding them with sacred mystery, where there was no danger that any bold intrusion would break the holy charm. Human fancy has never combined scenery of loveliness and beauty equal to their Elysian Fields, Hesperian Gardens, and Islands of the Blest. These lovely and peaceful abodes of the departed lay in unearthly beauty before the hopes of the ancients, and all the fascinations of poetry and eloquence were employed to heighten their charms and unfold their attractions. There were mild skies, soft air, refreshing shadows, and all the glories of perpetual spring.

There vine-clad vale and incense-breathing mound,
And bowers Elysian shed their fragrance round;
Lawns bask in light,—in gloom uprise the woods,
And mossy grottoes echo crystal floods
That murmur over sands of gold, and run
Now brown with shades, now glittering in the sun:
Ambrosial trees their buds and fruits unfold
In silver flowers and vegetable gold,

Perennial plants their pulpy treasures spread,
Like rubies gleaming 'mid the leaves o'erhead,
And odorous shrubs shed down their balmy tears,
Whene'er the listening grove the sighing night-wind hears.

N. C. BROOKS.

Not only the Poets, but philosophers also, declared their belief in a state and place of future happiness. "I am in good hopes," says Socrates, "that there is something remaining for those that are dead; and that, as hath been said of old, it is much better for good than for bad men." He says farther, "they who live holy and excellent lives, being freed from these earthly places as from prisons, ascend to a pure region above the earth, where they dwell; and those of them who are sufficiently purged by philosophy, live all their time without bodies, and ascend to still more beautiful habitations."

Plato, a disciple of Socrates, entertained his master's sentiments on this subject. He wrote extensively on the immortality of the soul, and the condition of the dead after this life. He says, "as to bad men, if they be not freed from their depravity in this life, that place which is pure from evil will not receive them when they die." In his Tenth Republic, he makes Socrates say: "It must be supposed concerning the just man, that if he be in poverty or sickness, or under any of those things which are accounted evils, these things shall in the issue be for good, either when he is living or after he is dead. For that man shall never be neglected by the gods, who earnestly desires to become just." Plato, in his dialogue entitled *Phædon*, represents Socrates, amid a circle of philosophers, shortly before his death,

as saying, among other things: "Those who have passed through life with peculiar sanctity of manners, are received on high into a pure region, where they live without their bodies through all eternity, in a series of joys and delights which cannot be described."

Leland says, "Aristotle, cited by Plutarch, speaking of the happiness of men after their departure out of this life, represents it as a most ancient opinion, so old that no man knows when it began, or who was the author of it, that it hath been handed down to us by tradition from infinite ages." The same author adds: "Plutarch, in his consolation to Apollonius, not only approves the sentiments concerning the great antiquity of this tradition, but represents it as an opinion delivered by the most ancient Poets and Philosophers, that some kind of honor and dignity shall be conferred upon excellent persons, after their departure out of this life; and that there is a certain region appointed, in which the souls of such persons reside. The same eminent Philosopher, in his consolatory letter to his wife on the death of their little child, supposes that the souls of infants pass, after death, into a better and more divine state. And that this is what may be gathered from their ancient laws and customs, derived by traditions from their ancestors."

Even among the sentiments of the cold and cheerless Stoics, there are some warm and hopeful inlets into a better world. Zeno, the father of the Stoic sect, placed the abode where the spirits of good men go in subterranean regions, but speaks of them as "pleasant and delightful regions." It is, however, doubted by some whether Zeno did not rather express

the popular opinion on this point, than his own mind. "Whatever were his sentiments upon it," says Dr. Leland, "certain it is that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments, was not the professed doctrine of this school, nor was it ever reckoned among the avowed principles of the Stoic sect." This dark confusion of ideas is a characteristic of all the pagan sages and systems. It is found even in Seneca, the most prominent and excellent of the Stoics. Like short, pleasant, and hope-inspiring interludes in a wretched dream, so do glimpses of a future happy life appear in the ideas of this ancient sage. "Sometimes he speaks in a clear and noble manner of the happiness of souls after death, when freed from the incumbrances of the body, and received into the place or regions of departed souls. Especially in his 102d epistle to Lucilius, he has some sublime thoughts on this subject; and among other things declares, that the last day of this present life is to be regarded as the birth-day of an eternal one."*

The Magi of Babylonia, Media, Assyria, and Persia taught, with eternal punishments, also eternal rewards. They believed that there were, under the Supreme Being, two angels, one of Light, the other of Darkness; one presiding over good souls, the other over the evil. At the end of the world there shall be a resurrection and a day of Judgment; after which the angel of Darkness shall take the wicked away to the place of punishment. Then "the angel of Light and

* Dr. Leland on the Necessity of Divine Revelation, Vol. II,
p. 292.

his disciples shall also go into a world of their own, where they shall receive, in everlasting light, the reward due to their good deeds."

If, now, we come down to modern times, we shall find that the belief in a future life of happiness still prevails among all tribes and nations of pagans. "The natives of the Society Isles believe, that after death there is not only a state of conscious existence, but degrees of eminence and felicity, according as men have been more or less pleasing to the *Eatova*, or Deity, while upon earth." In the Friendly Islands the belief prevails that the soul after death "is immediately conveyed, in a fast-sailing canoe, to a distant country, called Doobludha, which they describe as resembling the Mahometan paradise—that those who are conveyed thither are no more subject to death, but feast on all the favorite productions of their native soil, with which this blissful abode is plentifully furnished. The New Zealanders believe, that the third day after the interment of a man, the heart separates itself from the corpse, and that this separation is announced by a gentle breeze of wind, which gives warning of its approach by an inferior divinity that hovers over the grave, and who carries it to the clouds. The inhabitants of the Pelew Islands, according to the account of Captain Wilson, although they have few religious rites and ceremonies, believe in one Supreme Being, and in a future state of rewards and punishments. In the religion of the Kalmuc Tartars, the doctrine of a future state holds a conspicuous place." The inhabitants of Northern Tartary believe "that there is one Supreme Being, that he is our all-merciful

and common Parent, and that he will reward with a happy state hereafter, those who live virtuously in this world. The Birmans believe in the transmigration of souls, after which, they maintain that the radically bad will be sentenced to lasting punishment, while the good will enjoy eternal happiness on a mountain called Meru."** The various tribes of the African continent, according to Addison, believe that there is a future state of happiness, and that it is of such a nature that whatever the soul shall at any time desire will be immediately before it to be enjoyed. It is well known, that all those tribes in Asia and Africa, which are under the influence of Mahometanism, believe firmly in that heaven of sensual delight which their prophet has described with such animated eloquence.

The belief in a future state and place of happiness is general among all the tribes of our own Indians. Their descriptions of that happy region have a variety of shades; but though it is ornamented with slight difference of imagery, it is in substance the same. It is in general this; "They expect to be translated to a delightful country, where they shall always have a clear unclouded sky, and enjoy a perpetual spring; where the forest will abound with game, and the lakes with fish, which may be taken without requiring a painful exertion of skill, or a laborious pursuit; in short, that they shall live forever in regions of plenty, and enjoy every gratification they delight in here, in a greater degree."

This universal experience proves that the desire for

* Dick's Future State.

happiness hereafter is as natural as the desire for life itself. As this desire for life reaches beyond the grave, so also does the desire to be happy there; and if this universal desire for immortal life may be considered a true prophecy of the actual existence of such a life, then the universal desire for happiness beyond the grave may, with the same force of probability, be regarded as a true earnest of its existence. It is pleasant to see these drops of consolation bubbling up from the deep wants of pagan hearts; and although they form a stream which runs a dark, crooked, and tedious way, and whose waters stagnate in many a pool of superstition and ignorance; yet, when it once finds its way out into the light of divine revelation, it becomes "a pure river of life, clear as crystal," where all may drink abundant consolations, and refresh their souls with the sweetest hopes of a happy, endless life.

SECTION II.

PAGAN IDEAS OF FUTURE HAPPINESS WERE UNSTEADY AND UNSATISFYING TO THEM.

As we have seen, the pagan world have had some ideas of a life of future happiness; they were, however, not able to come to a steady, comfortable, and satisfying repose, in their own minds and hearts, in regard to this doctrine. Like a benighted traveller, seeking his way in a dreary wood, rather bewildered than aided by the mimic lights that play around him in the dismal bogs, so "the heathen in his blindness" has sought after a better life amid the shadows which hang over the grave. His light of reason and dim

tradition has been so unsteady, and prevailed so feebly against the darkness in which it attempted to shine, that he has often lain down in despair, or followed it with a doubting and heavy heart. To convince ourselves of this, we need only attend to the alternate hopes and fears, which mingle together in the speculations of the wisest among the pagans, when their minds and hearts have been most earnest on this subject. We are touched with the tenderest sympathy, as we follow them in their reasonings, and we must be insensible as stone, if we do not melt in gratitude to God for the clearer light in which we are permitted to walk, by the grace of Him who brought immortality to light by the gospel.

The doctrine of a future life, as already remarked, is found in the earliest traditions of the pagan world, when they were yet without civilization or learning. "One would have hoped," says Dr. Leland, "that afterwards in the ages of learning and philosophy, a doctrine so useful to mankind, and so agreeable to right reason, would have acquired new strength. But the fact was otherwise: many of those who pretended to a wisdom and penetration above the vulgar, quitting the ancient traditions, and affecting to govern themselves by the pure dictates of reason, absolutely denied the doctrine of the immortality of the soul and a future state, and exploded it as a vulgar error, unworthy of men of sense, and fit only to be left to the unthinking multitude. There were whole sects of philosophers, whose professed tenet it was, that the soul died with the body. Such were Democritus and his followers, the Cynic Cyrenaics, and especially the

numerous and wide extended sect of Epicureans; and many other philosophers agreed with them in this point." It is certain that the belief in a future life was more firmly held when it rested upon the testimony of the ancient tradition, than when, in the politer and more refined periods of pagan antiquity, it was rested upon the deductions of reason. Consequently, in proportion as science and philosophy advanced, this faith and this hope became more unsteady and uncomfortable; hence, also, we find that it hung, in the minds of all the philosophers, in the doubtful, painful poise, between hope and fear.

Socrates, to whom we referred in the preceding Section, as having said, in the lucid hours of his life, some beautiful things in regard to the happiness of a future life, and whose calmness in death has often been praised, was nevertheless very unsteady in his faith at the close of his life. He died, it is true, calmly; but it was the calmness of a philosopher, who felt that the public good, and all his previous professions and teachings, required that he should lead off in dying with a philosophic dignity. It is plain, from the following extract, that it was only partly the hope of a better life, and partly the hope of *no life at all*, that induced him to submit calmly to the ordeal of death. "When he was near his end, in discoursing with his friends concerning the immortality of the soul, and a future life, he expresses his hope that he should go to good men after death, 'but this,' he says, 'I would not absolutely affirm.' He indeed is more positive as to what relates to his going to the gods after death, though this he also qualifies, by say-

ing, that ‘if he could affirm any thing concerning matters of such a nature, he would affirm this.’ And he concludes that long discourse concerning the state of souls after death with saying, ‘That these things are so as I have represented them, it does not become any man of understanding to affirm,’ though he adds, ‘that if it appears that the soul is immortal, it seems reasonable to think, that either such things or something like them are true, with regard to our souls and their habitations after death; and that it is worth making a trial, for the trial is noble.’”*

How cheerless must have been this dark uncertainty to them, when the spirit stood in the evening twilight of mortal life! How different from this is the nervous language of the Apostle! “I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me in that day: and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing.” 2 Tim. iv. 6, 8. Here there is no trembling “if;” it is the firm language of one who knows whereof he affirms, by a consciousness deeper, broader, and firmer than life itself!

Plato, who was a disciple of Socrates, held the same sentiments in the same way. He, with Socrates, believed that even that future happiness of which they so doubtfully spake, if it existed at all, was only to be attained by cultivated souls, such as philosophers. The

* Dr. Leland.

common people would, at best, be in Elysium only for a time, and then would have to return into some kind of bodies, and go through a round of almost endless transmigrations. Sometimes, apparently for political purposes, he promises something good after death to such as would show themselves brave and fearless in war. The popular ideas on this subject he treats as fabulous traditions. As he, and the rest of his school, justified lying, if done at a needful time, and for some useful end ! we can scarcely help thinking, that the confusion which prevails in their teachings on this subject, is to be explained on this ground. It was no doubt regarded as a sweet lie, comfortable to the heart, and one which would induce some to be better citizens than they otherwise would have been, in the hope of a happy life hereafter.

Cicero, who wrote well about another life in many respects, still halted between the hope of a better life and no life at all ! Though he *hoped* to live hereafter, yet he *feared* a total extinction. “If,—that cheerless *if*—“if the day of our death brings with it not an extinction of our being, but only a change of our abode, nothing can be more desirable ; but if it absolutely destroys and puts an end to our existence, what can be better than, amidst the labors and troubles of this life, to rest in a profound and eternal sleep ?” In another place he comforts himself thus : “Whilst I shall exist, I shall not be troubled at any thing, since I have no fault to charge myself with ; and if I shall not exist, I shall be deprived of all sense.” What a wretched consolation is this ! How different is this from the short but hopeful declaration : “To die is gain !”

“What gain?” a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Seneca, the most correct moralist among the ancient pagans, speaks of the hopes of a better life as “a kind of pleasing dream, an opinion embraced by great men, very agreeable indeed, but which they promised rather than proved.” Again he says: “Perhaps, if the report of wise men be true, and some place receives us after death, he whom we think to have perished is only sent before.” In another place: “If it be so, that souls remain after they are set loose from the body, a happier state awaits them, than whilst they are in the body.” Here again is that cheerless “if.” One who was mourning for the death of his brother, he directs to comfort himself thus: “If the dead have no sense, the soul of my brother has escaped from all the incommodities of life, and is restored to that state he was in before he was born; and being free from all evil, fears nothing, desires nothing, suffers nothing. If the dead have any sense, the soul of my brother, being let loose as it were from a long confinement, and entirely his own master, exults, and enjoys a clear sight of the nature of things, and looks down as from a higher situation upon all things human with contempt; and he has a nearer view of divine things, the reasons of which he has long sought in vain. Why therefore do I languish for the want of him, who is either happy, or not at all? To lament one that is happy is envy, and one that has no existence, is madness.” Alas! is not this the comfort of those who have no hope?

Plutarch's comfort, in regard to a future life, is equally cold. "In his consolation to Apollonius," says Leland, "he observes, that Socrates said, that death is either like to a sleep, or to a journey afar off and of long continuance, or to the entire extinction of soul and body." He then shows, that on either of these suppositions death can be no evil; and yet how cheerless to a Christian's mind is the best of them! How comfortless is the prospect of an eternal deep sleep, to one who has known the exquisiteness of waking joys! By the journey of long continuance, he no doubt means the common notion of the soul's transmigration through an endless line of bodies and beings, or with the joyless hope of losing its own separate existence at length, by an absorption into the great soul of Divinity! There is no comfort in this. As to total extinction, the soul shrinks from it, and shudders at the idea. The worst of woes is scarcely more repugnant to the mind than

"This secret dread, and inward horror
Of falling into nought!"

How different from all these chilling speculations is the following language of clear, animating, and holy confidence of faith: "We know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

SECTION III.

PAGAN IDEAS OF FUTURE HAPPINESS WERE GROSS AND FALSE IN THEIR MOST IMPORTANT FEATURES.

WE have seen that pagans have had some ideas of a future state of happiness — we have also seen that these ideas were unsteady, and unsatisfying to them ; we now say that those notions of future happiness with which they consoled themselves were always inadequate, and often palpably false, and associated with such other conceptions as are, in the highest degree, gross and repulsive to Christian feelings.

As may be seen from the preceding Sections, their conceptions of future felicity were chiefly of an imaginative cast, and, to a great extent, grossly sensual. They bore upon them the impress of those passions and enjoyments from which Christianity proposes to make men entirely free, as the chief qualification for the enjoyment of a pure and perfect bliss in heaven. It was a life into which they should take all their human passions, feelings, desires, and habits, and supposed its chief desirableness to consist in the abundant opportunities it would afford of indulging in all those pleasures in which they here delight. It was a heaven in which there would be, not so much an elevation of the soul's nature, as a full satisfaction of its present desires ; in whatever any one placed his chief delight on earth, that he expected to enjoy in the future life to the full.

Many of the wisest of the ancient philosophers held that the joys of Elysium were temporary ; some, as

Virgil, said they would last a thousand years, after which their souls would return again into bodies, such as were suited to their dispositions. If the soul had been good in this world, it would enter the body of such a man or animal as had been characterized by a gentle, amiable, serene, and peaceful disposition. Pythagoras pretended that he had himself passed through a number of bodies, naming the persons in whose bodies his soul had dwelt; and he professed that he had a distinct recollection of this previous existence! The future history of his life, he believed, would be characterized by similar transitions; and this is what this system promised to all. This notion of successive transmigrations, in one form or other, pervaded all the philosophical or poetical conceptions of the East. "A mighty encouragement this to the practice of virtue, that they who applied themselves to it were to have the privilege of animating the bodies of ants and bees, and at the utmost to return to the labors and offices of this mortal life."

To some, this idea of transmigrations, in this form, was not satisfactory, and they attempted to improve upon it. Many among the Pythagoreans and Stoics believed that all souls are a part of the Deity, or of the great soul of the world in a pantheistic sense, and that all souls return again into this great Source of souls. Some held that this absorption into the world-soul would take place immediately at death, and others supposed that it would only be accomplished after one, some said three, thousand years; going, in the mean time, through certain preparatory transmigrations. Some again held that the soul of Divinity in some

cases reproduced those souls, after which they would return, either to their own, or to other bodies, to resume again the concerns of this life. Some were of opinion that every soul would have to pass through all terrestrial and marine animals and birds, before this final absorption into Deity could be accomplished. The happiness which they were to enjoy must be before this refusion of their souls into Deity took place, for that would put an end to their personal existence; since in this refusion the soul was just "like a bottle filled with sea-water, which, swimming awhile upon the ocean, does, upon the bottle's breaking, mingle with the common mass." It was in reference to this notion, that the souls lose their separate personal existence, that Seneca said, "Death brings no evil or inconvenience along with it; for that must have an existence which is subject to any inconvenience."

Some of the Stoics believed that at certain periods — at the end of the "great year," — what they called conflagrations, would take place, at which time every thing would return to its original elements, and with it also the souls of men. Seneca, speaking of this, says, "Those souls which were happy, and had obtained eternal felicity, shall then be involved in the common ruin, and return to the ancient elements." "The opinion of many of the Stoics," says Dr. Leland, "is thus given by Numenius: "The soul is corruptible, but does not die or perish immediately upon its departure from the body, but continues for some time by itself; that which is wise to the dissolution of all things, that of fools for some short time." All this is in the end nothing but

the cold consolation “of falling into nought!” How cheerless is this philosophy to a being of infinite longings!

Plutarch gives it as the opinion of Pythagoras and Plato, that the soul, “when it departs out of the body, goes to the soul of the universe, to that which is congenial with itself.” Cicero says that all Pythagoreans were of the same opinion.

We find that, even among those who professed to believe in a personal continuance after death, they make frequent allusions to that life in a way which betrays a want of zeal in regard to it. Though, as we saw in a preceding Section, their imaginations sometimes kindled up to great raptures in their descriptions of it, yet in more sober moments the regions of the dead were gloomy shades. “Thus in Homer’s Odyssey, Achilles, though he was one of the heroic souls, tells Ulysses, who met him in the shades below, that he had rather be a rustic on earth, serving a poor man for hire, and having but scanty fare, than to have a large empire over all the dead.” This leads us to fear that the beautiful things which philosophers and poets said, in regard to the future felicity of the good, were merely philosophical refinements, or perhaps pious frauds on the ignorant, practised in the service of an earthly policy.

We see plainly, from these conceptions, that all they believed in reference to future happiness, was in its form false, and frequently of such a nature as to make even the attainment of such a boon undesirable. Nothing was true but their want of it, and desire after it. When even the earnest spirit had courage to hope for

future blessedness, under the best form in which they conceived of it, all the consolation which such hope might have afforded, was lost amid the doubts which were cast upon it by conflicting opinions. What we remarked in the preceding chapter is here confirmed: the reason, the speculations, and the logic of humanity are all false and cheerless, only its sighs and its yearnings are sweet and true.

SECTION IV.

PAGAN IDEAS OF FUTURE HAPPINESS, SO FAR AS TRUE, ORIGINALLY SPRANG FROM REVELATION.

WE have remarked that reason never did, and never could, originate the idea of a future life. Reason may follow it out in many of its results, when it is once hinted at, or confirm it when it is once revealed, but that which is future must necessarily lie beyond its sphere. We need offer no argument on this subject, except to refer to it as a matter of history. The Pagans never profess that the idea of an immortal life was reached by them, by the aid of reason; but always refer to it as a very ancient tradition, which they endeavored to confirm by reason. Could we even show that now, reason, enlightened by revelation, and having the advantage of the knowledge of the fact through revelation, is able to reach this idea by its own power, this would not prove that the same could have been done, or was done, in the morning of the world, and in the infancy of the human mind.

“Aristotle, as cited by Plutarch, speaking of the happiness of men after their departure out of this life, represents it as a most ancient opinion, so old

that no man knows when it began, or who was the author of it, that it hath been handed down to us from infinite ages.”* Lord Bolingbroke, whose interest in the matter would have lain the other way, acknowledges that “the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and a future state of rewards and punishments, began to be taught before we have any light into antiquity; and when we begin to have any, we find it established, that it was strongly inculcated from time immemorial, and as early as the most ancient and learned nations appear to us.”

That tradition, and not reason, furnishes the origin of the doctrine of another life, is confirmed by the fact that the more the learned pagans reasoned, the more they doubted; and, when all their strength of logic was spent upon it, they either cast it away as a siren lie, or fell back for rest upon the ancient tradition—a proof of the truth of the deep postulate, that man is constituted first to believe, and then to know. If it is true now, in the broad light of revelation, that “*faith* is the substance (or confident expectation), of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen,” how much more strongly must the force of this truth have been felt, when all science was yet as a child in capacity!

If the idea of a future life itself could not have been originated by reason, much less could the conception of happiness in that life have been derived from that source; for that sense of guilt and unworthiness which has characterized human nature uni-

* See Leland on the Necessity of Divine Revelation, Vol. II, Part II, Chap. II, where this matter is discussed at length.

versally would have prevented such hope from arising in the heart, as we find it has always darkened and discouraged it, even when it was suggested. The desire after happiness is natural and spontaneous; but this desire never rises into hope and faith in a guilty heart, unless it receive encouragement from some exterior source. Accordingly, we find that the belief in future happiness, like faith in a future life itself, came always by tradition.

This leads us to ask, where must we seek for the source of those traditional ideas among pagans which are exhibited in the preceding Sections? They must evidently have their origin in revelation. We have no evidence that any revelations were made directly to any pagan nations; but we do know that God, from the earliest time, communicated with the Jews; and it is not difficult to conceive how so pleasing an idea could have strayed out from them into the deepest gloom of paganism. It is also easy to any reflecting mind to believe that such an idea, though it might be much distorted, obscured, and changed through successive generations, would never be effaced from the human mind and heart, unless it were reasoned away under the influence of that pride of intellect which considers it weakness to be dependent. It has been often shown, and it would be easy to reproduce the proof, that almost all the religious ideas of pagans are broken fragments of the true revelation—fragments which, it can be shown, belong to the great and harmonious whole, as it has unfolded itself by historical revelations from the infancy of the human race. These ideas, like the names of places and tribes, have

often been so changed through the mutations of time, that they bear very little resemblance to their originals, but they can nevertheless be clearly traced to their parentage by following them back through the history of their changes. In this way the conception of Elysian Fields, Hesperian Gardens, and Islands of the Blest in far off and stormless seas, which smiled so invitingly before the hopes of the ancient pagans, can easily be traced back to the whispers of revelations in the cool of Eden, and in the tents of the Patriarchs, which promised to the good a land of peace and love beyond the stars, of which the earthly Paradise was but a shadowy type.

When we say that the idea of a future happy life, as it is found to exist among pagans from the earliest ages, came originally from revelation, we do not deny that man is so constituted as to want an immortal life of happiness, as the proper complement of his own nature. We acknowledge the existence, in every human spirit, of that which Cicero calls "a kind of natural admonition." The want of immortality, and the desire after it, is something different from a knowledge and hope of it, and of faith in it. The soul of the very first pagan *was* immortal, and consequently of infinite capacity in this respect, and it would therefore, by impulse of its own nature, breathe after the infinite. As the Gentiles who have not God's law, have nevertheless "the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness," either accusing or excusing them, according as they come up to, or fall short of, its demands; so also the desire for that reward in another life which the law involves, is im-

pressed upon the same entablature. This does not, however, imply that the minds of men can, in their natural state, by their own powers of reason, originate this idea. It is not brought forth by the heart, but written in it; and only after it feels the impression made by a foreign hand, are its energies warmed and waked to a believing sense of it.

As the seed has the capacity to grow, bloom, and bear fruit, so the human spirit has the power of an endless life—but as the seed needs the presence of foreign conditions to actualize its own possibilities, so the human spirit needs revelation to enable it to unfold what lies in its own constitution. It may desire without revelation, but it cannot believe without it. It is not exactly true that

“Hope springs eternal in the human breast.”

It only springs when it is touched by the warm finger of divine love. “Experience”—not reason—“worketh hope.” Those that are outside of God’s gracious revelations, “sorrow as those which have no hope,” in reference to those who are asleep in death. It is God, through Christ, who “has begotten us unto a lively hope” of that inheritance which is “incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven.” The heathen, who are strangers to the covenants of promise, “have no hope, and are without God in the world.” Touched, however, by the least ray of promise, “hope springs;” and thus the heart, having once an intimation of another life, never afterwards feels easy and at home amid the sorrows and wants of this. Then, dissatisfied with the present, man leans with anxious heart over the future, and

“——Never *is*, but always *to be blest*.”

Then, as has been the case amid “the groaning and travailing in pain” of the heathen in all ages and in all lands,

“The soul, uneasy, and confined from home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come.”

Thus to revelation belongs all the glory of discovering to us an endless life of bliss beyond the grave. This truth, like all truths, is only sweet “as it is in Jesus.” In the painful yearnings of the pagans we discover the need of it; in the pages of divine revelation we discover the promise of it; and in our blessed Saviour we are, or may be, begotten to a lively hope of it. With the pagans, we all feel the need of such enduring bliss, beyond the narrow range of earth’s sorrows and tears. It will be our own folly and bitterness if we cling not to the promise of it, and secure it in Christ. “Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it!”

CHAPTER III.

Scripture Pictures of Heaven.

A sovereign balm for every wound,
A cordial for our fears.

THE most general and comprehensive idea we get of heaven from the Sacred Scriptures, is that of a place of perfect satisfaction to all saints. It lies before the hopes of each one as the exact counterpart and complement of the void or wound which may be in his heart. To the friendless and persecuted, it is a place of sympathy and love. To the stranger and outcast, it is home. To those who have borne much trouble and anxiety, it is peace. To those whose life has been one continued scene of labor and toil, it is rest.

These different ideas of heaven are all true, because its provisions extend to them all. While, therefore, the most general picture of our future blessedness is that of full satisfaction, the particular features of it may still be prominent to each one's hopes and desires, according to the peculiar preponderance of his wants and woes on earth. Heaven is a fulness of joy —

“A sovereign balm for every wound.”

A careful study of the names applied in Scripture to the fruition of the other world, will best illustrate to us how the general fulness of heavenly joy becomes a particular fulness to each saint, whatever may be his individual condition. We will also see that the sacred writers, in their consolatory addresses to the faithful, always presented those features of future bliss which were, at the time and under the circumstances, best adapted to afford them comfort. This gives us a glorious idea of that joy which may comfort us here, and bless us in perfection hereafter. As the sun, which hangs over us in one broad blaze of light, has nevertheless a ray for each flower that grows upon the earth, from which it may extract a color to suit itself; so, the spiritual heaven, towards which the mourning sons of earth are invited to look, has a joy for all who will appropriate it. "In thy presence is FULNESS of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

The most common name given to our future home is HEAVEN. This refers not, in its primary sense, to the substance of our future felicity, but to that which is external or local about it. It refers not so much to state, as to place.

Future felicity has never, except in the vain speculations of carnal wisdom, been dissociated from place. The Bible, which always includes "the resurrection of the body" in its ideas of "the life everlasting," with a beautiful consistency, ever attributes locality and materiality to the inheritance which it promises to the saints. This place, this locality, it calls — Heaven.

As the glorious fact of "the life everlasting" was a matter necessarily not of sight, but of faith and of

hope, the spirit of inspiration was not at pains to be definite as to the *where* of this place. In a general way it was referred to, as in the empyrean heights above. More particularly, in the usage of the Scriptures, the word Heaven has three meanings. First, it designates the regions of the air, in which are the clouds and fowls of heaven; second, the regions of the blue firmament, in which are the sun, moon, and stars of heaven; third, the vast, and to mortal eyes impenetrable regions beyond, which were regarded as the holy of holies, in which God and all higher spirits are more particularly at home, and where the redeemed of the earth shall dwell in eternal felicity after death.

Regarding this third heaven as a place of happiness, the sacred writers applied to it various other names, which represent their views of its various features of bliss.

It was called PARADISE. The Saviour said to the penitent, believing, praying, dying thief: "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Luke xxiii. 43. Paul was "caught up into the third heaven, into paradise." 2 Cor. xii. 4. He that appeared in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, promised through John, to him that overcometh, that he should "eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." Rev. ii. 7.

This name is applied to Heaven in allusion to that "garden which the Lord planted eastward in Eden," in which He made "to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden." That must have been a spot of beauty and loveliness such as has never else-

where graced the face of this unfortunate earth. The country in which it lay was itself called Eden, which means *pleasure* or *delight*, and this garden was yet a spot of special delight in the midst of this scene of delights. It was planted by the Lord, and of course it was worthy of Him. It was planted with *every* tree pleasant to the sight, and with *every* tree good for food. What a combination of beauty and of use!

This lovely place was lost by the fall; but those who, for their sins, were banished from it into the dreary wilderness without, could not lose the image of its loveliness from their hearts. The remembrance of it was perpetuated in records and traditions. It floated before their vision in every lonely and distressful hour. Thus, after they had received the promise of a return to their original state, through the mediation of Him who, in the fulness of time, should come to their rescue, they naturally associated images of Paradise with this new land of their hopes. Their restoration, through the Messiah, would be the lost Paradise regained. Hence we may easily suppose that the tenderest, the sweetest, and the most joyous feelings were awakened in their hearts, whenever the heavenly inheritance was called Paradise.

Heaven, under the figure of Paradise, stood in contrast in their minds with the desolate earth around them, upon which they could see in all directions the marks of the curse, in the form of thorns and thistles, of barrenness and blight. What picture could be presented to the hopes of a nature-loving and imaginative Oriental heart, more attractive than that which sacred tradition drew of that rural abode of innocence

and love which was lost by sin. The devout Jewish shepherd, while watching his flock picking the scanty sod, or while driving them from place to place in painful search of better pasture—or the husbandman, while toiling in the sweat of his face to allure his bread from the earth, would look in hopeful smiles through the tears of his toil toward that land, which, like the Paradise of old, should yield spontaneously; where trees of richest foliage and of most delicious fruits should invite the eye, and which, while they dropped their fruit upon the earth before them, should at the same time cover those who gather it, with their shelter and their shade. Whether they regarded this representation of heaven as figurative or literal, it was alike true in its substance, and alike pleasant to their faith and hope. How home-like, how full of touching associations as connected with the past, and how full of promise was the hope that what was lost on earth would be found in heaven!

For a length of time the people of God knew of nothing on earth more lovely and pleasant than Paradise. In time, however, another picture presented itself to their view that became a rival to this. While Paradise lay in the past, and was receding silently to a still more indistinct distance, there drew up in the horizon of the hopeful future, an image of perhaps still greater attraction, and one which had this advantage, that it was drawing ever nearer to them. This was the land of CANAAN—the land of promised inheritance. This, accordingly, was also made a type of Heaven; and they gazed at the land of their hopes beyond the skies, through its lovely images. This was

the picture, yonder was the reality. This was the shadow, yonder was the substance. This was the earthly, yonder was the heavenly Canaan—the true inheritance.

That Heaven hath richly clothed itself also in this kind of imagery in the minds of the pious, is evident from the frequent allusions made to it by the apostles. It was “an inheritance among all them that are sanctified.” Acts xx. 32. It was “the inheritance of the saints in light.” Col. i. 12. It was the “eternal inheritance.” Heb. ix. 15. It was “an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven.” 1 Peter i. 4.

Heaven, under the figure of an inheritance, must have been peculiarly attractive to them after they had lost their earthly inheritance, and were banished from it. Those Elders of Miletus, to whom Paul, in his farewell words, promised an inheritance among all them that are sanctified, were Jewish Christians, whom the Gospel found as exiles from their own country. So also were those at Colosse, whose minds he seeks to turn away from their original home in Canaan, to the better “inheritance of the saints in light.” When Paul wrote to “the Hebrews” in general, he calls it, with beautiful propriety, an “eternal inheritance,” in opposition to that temporal one which they had lost. Peter, in his epistle to the Jewish “strangers scattered through Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,” alludes, in a manner most touchingly appropriate, to their circumstances. They had been exiles, and so were their fathers before them, ever since those cruel persecutions under Antiochus Epi-

phanes—no home, no country had they; hence he directs them to look away from the earthly to the heavenly inheritance. Their former inheritance was corrupted by the feet of the uncircumcised who walked in it; but this is “in corruptible.” That was defiled, for Antiochus had profaned the temple and polluted the altar by the sacrifice of a swine! but this is to be “undefiled.” That was a transient possession, and they had long since lost it, but this “fadeth not away.” That is forfeited, but this is “reserved.” That one was on earth, and lay surrounded with many vexatious enemies; but this is “in Heaven”—where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

The central glory of this land of their inheritance was the HOLY CITY, with its temple on Zion. Hence this city and temple also became a symbol of Heaven. It is that “Jerusalem which is above.” It is that city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. It is the “holy city, New Jerusalem.” As the Holy City was the very heart of the Jewish nation, the only spot on earth where all their religious affections centered, the place of their pride and their joy, Heaven could not be represented to them in a more attractive light than as the glorious anti-type of this “perfection of beauty,” this “joy of the whole earth.” There they would no more dwell in their scattered condition, at the rude mercy of their enemies, but “compact together,” clothed with strength as with a garment. Heaven, as a city, would be a place of safety, where adamantine walls, and a “great gulf fixed,” should forever forbid invasion; and, above all, where God should dwell among them, as their

refuge, their strength, and their joy, even more gloriously than he ever did between the Cherubim in the temple at Jerusalem. There they should celebrate the return of their mournful captivity in songs of everlasting joy, and God himself should wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Very attractive also was that idea of heaven which is set forth by the word REST, or SABBATH. This presents the heavenly blessedness to our contemplation under the idea of *time*. As in reference to *space* the Jewish heart centered in the Holy City and Temple; so in reference to time, it centered in their sabbaths, or rests. These were days of heaven, for whose return they longed, as sleepless eyes long for the morning.

Under this figure the future blessed life is alluded to by the apostle, when he shows the Hebrew Christians that neither the rest which Joshua gave them, nor that which was spoken of the seventh day, nor yet that of which David spake, were *the* rest; but only typical of, and preparatory to, one still better to come. Heb. iv. He shows that there is a rest beyond all these, and different from them, and that it "remaineth to the people of God"—the rest of Heaven.

Oh ! there will dawn at last a day,—
A sun that never sets shall rise ;
Night will not veil his ceaseless ray,
The heavenly Sabbath never dies !

What delightful associations, in both Jewish and Christian minds, crowd around the rest of the Sabbath ! It is heaven in time. It is the repose of God

himself; for the first and deepest reason given for its existence, is that on it *God rested!* Whatever be that repose which can be properly predicated of God, it must include the returning unto himself of creative energies. No wonder that on the Sabbath all nature, in a sense other than merely poetic, ebbs back into a position of profound repose. No wonder that man—man in union with God—should feel, with a sympathy deeper than his reason, the sweet serenity of Sabbath hours! No wonder that weary man should feel an influence from out the infinite, laving his spirit, reminding him that beyond the changings and heavings of time and space, there remains a full rest for the soul, towards which the Sabbath, as a type, strongly allures him. It did so among the Jews. Every Sabbath was to them a prophet, proclaiming a coming rest, more undisturbed and holy than any they had yet enjoyed—a rest, of which this was but the shadow cast over into time.

To the Jews and first Christians, exposed as they were, in their eventful times, to many changes of fortune, and to much painful uneasiness, this view of Heaven must have been very consoling. No less does each individual believer, in his own wearisome pilgrimage, find it delightful to refer his harassed and perplexed spirit to this promise of a final rest for all the weary. To many, very many toil-worn and heavily-laden Christians, we venture to say, heaven presents a very prominent feature of its attractions, when it promises to those who die in the Lord, that they shall “rest from their labors.” The cessation from all toil and care, together with the delights of worship which

the day of holy rest afford, presents a picture of blessedness worthy of heaven.

Listen to the song of the worshipper as his serene soul, amid the privileges of the earthly Sabbath, rises to the contemplation of a still nobler rest on high.

Thine earthly sabbaths, Lord, we love,
But there's a nobler rest above ;
To that our longing souls aspire,
With cheerful hope and strong desire.

No more fatigue, no more distress,
Nor sin, nor hell, shall reach the place ;
No groans shall mingle with the songs
Which warble from immortal tongues.

No rude alarms of raging foes,
No cares to break the long repose,
No midnight shade, no clouded sun,
But sacred, high, eternal noon.

O long expected day, begin,
Dawn on these realms of wo and sin ;
Fain would we leave this weary road,
And sleep in death, to rest with God.

Descending still farther into those details of heavenly bliss set forth by the names applied to it, we find that it is also called "OUR FATHER'S HOUSE." The pleasant feelings of the Jew gathered, in a general way, around his country, his city, his temple, his festive occasions and sabbaths, but more particularly his home was his earthly heaven. In their own homes and families they particularized their affections and associations. Those afforded them occasional and extraordinary pleasure; these brought with them a more

ordinary, but a more constant happiness. When they thought of Heaven as their "Father's house," they caught a glimpse of its familiar, social, home-like features. They were reminded of the happiness of its communion life in its smaller circles—of those "many mansions," as we may probably understand that passage, (John xiv. 2,) each of which may open up a new circle of social enjoyment in some respects peculiar to itself, having features differing from other varieties of bliss, and affording thus an abundance of ever-varying joy.

This view of Heaven presents to us God as the Father of all His saints. They return at his call from their wanderings to the same paternal shelter. His open arms receive them with fondest affection. He makes them his heirs, because they are his children; and manifests for them evermore the fondest concern. He gathers them around Himself in one circle of holy and eternal love.

It is sin that divides and estranges; it is Christianity that gathers and unites. It makes of all families, one family. It is a most exalted idea of Heaven which presents itself when we view it as the consummation of that great scheme of redemption, which unites all to God as their Father, and God to all as His children. For such society the Christian has frequent occasion to sigh amid the divisions of earth.

The name "ABRAHAM'S BOSOM," as applied to Heaven, represents the affectionate nearness of the saints to each other in the communion of the heavenly life. To lie on the bosom of another indicates, in Scripture, deep child-like affection. So children repose

upon the hearts of their parents. So friends, who feasted together, when the reclining posture was in custom, leaned upon each other's bosom, as John did upon that of the Saviour. Here is confidence and love—the deepest elements of bliss.

To be carried into Abraham's bosom, is to be admitted into the most endearing fellowship of those eminent saints who have lived in the church on earth before us, and who are now blessed with faithful Abraham. It is to sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs in the Kingdom of God, and at this heavenly festival, to rest upon their bosoms in the most endearing communion. Oh! to feast on that which satisfies the soul, and to do it in such society!—this is Heaven!

All that the names we have now alluded to involves, is taken up and comprehended in the idea of LIFE, ETERNAL LIFE. By these terms the joyous existence of the future world is frequently designated. It is life in the full, emphatic sense of that term. The life of an unregenerate soul is only a process of death, with all the pains and pangs that attend it. All his activities are activities of dissolution and decay. In the case of sinners, a process similar to that of decay in the body, is also going forward in the soul—a process from bad to worse, from misery to misery—a painful struggling in collision with God, and out of all right relations with Him.

“For ever wasting, yet enduring still;
Dying perpetually, yet never dead!”

In opposition to this, Heavenly existence is life, true life, life in right relations to God, and to all

beings, and to all things — life, full, blessed, and eternal.

Even the life of the Christian in this world is not full and pure; it is mixed and mingled with death. There is a daily dying, as well as a daily living in him. The elements of death often hinder and obscure the free activities of the divine life in him; the remains of sin hang on him like a “body of death,” and frequently press from him the exclamation, “Oh wretched man that I am!” From all this Heaven will relieve him, and there he will enjoy life in its full sense. This bliss, in all its exceeding weight of joy, is yet, for the most part, beyond our experience and conception, and it will be so until Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory. If life is so joyous, even in this region of death, as we see it to be in the vegetable, animal, or in the still higher intellectual and moral kingdoms, what must it be in the sphere of the spirit, and in the pure element of the Heavenly place! Oh! my soul, what a destiny awaits thee! What a pearl of price lies hidden in this field of the infinite before thee! Go and sell all that thou hast, and buy this field!

From these Scripture pictures of Heaven what an idea do we get of the all-sufficiency of its glorious rewards! It is suited to every want and to every woe. Every sigh that heaves the heart, and every grief that rends it, will forever grow still amid the soothings of its eternal sympathy and love. Hear it, O ye wearied and weeping millions! all are invited — and all may come!

Come ye disconsolate, where'er ye languish,
Come, to the mercy-seat, fervently kneel ;
Here bring your wounded hearts, here tell your anguish,
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal.

Joy to the comfortless, light to the straying,
Hope, when all others die, fadeless and pure ;
Here speaks the Comforter in mercy saying,
Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot cure

Here see the bread of life ; see waters flowing
Forth from the throne of God, pure from above ;
Come to the feast prepared ; come, ever knowing,
Earth has no sorrow but Heaven can remove !

CHAPTER IV.

Foreshades of Heaven.

A trance of high and solemn bliss,
From purest ether came ;
'Mid such a heavenly scene as this,
Death is an empty name.

WILSON.

THE Christian, in the progress of his history, passes through three modes, or conditions of life—the life of nature, the life of grace, and the life of glory. Or, to express the same idea in another form, he lives first in sense, then in faith, and at last in fruition.

The present earthly life of the Christian is prevailingly the middle one of these three, that of faith—“We walk by faith.” This middle life of faith is, however, a mixed life; it reaches back and includes the life of sense; and it reaches forward and includes the life of glorious heavenly fruition, in the way of prelibation. As the life of faith, reflecting back, sanctifies the life of sense, so it reaches also forward as the dawning life of glory. The life of faith does not destroy the life of sense or nature, but fulfils it. In like manner the life of faith is itself taken up and included at last in the life of glory, the substance of which it already has as its foundation.

It is therefore the Christian's happy privilege, though he still lives under the conditions of sense and faith, to live also

Quite on the verge of Heaven.

From that mysterious border-land of faith, where earth merges into Heaven, he sees, in the blissful tremblings of hope, from the spiritual orient, the glad gleams of the eternal morning.

Heaven comes down his soul to greet.

This we call the foretaste of Heaven. "It is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession."

By foretastes of Heaven we do not merely mean something of a joyous nature which is promised us, and which gives us pleasure in the way of hope; but we mean, by that word, something actually introduced into the life of the soul, which exists there as the very substance of what we hope for. We speak not of a distant Heaven, to be gazed at, but of a present Heaven dawning in the soul. It is not a seeing beforehand, but a *tasting* beforehand. It is a "glory revealed *in us*," not merely to us. That is an amazing truth, and one which belongs to the deepest life of Christianity, which is so happily expressed in the hymn:

The men of grace have found
Glory begun below;
Celestial fruits on earthly ground
From faith and hope may grow.

The hill of Zion yields
A thousand sacred sweets,
Before we reach the heavenly fields,
Or walk the golden streets.

The grapes of Eschol, which the messengers brought over the Jordan into the camp of Israel in the wilderness, and which were tasted by them there, were a foretaste of the fruits of Canaan, because they were the same as they should eat when once they should be actually in the good land. So a foretaste of Heaven, in the heart of a saint, is the real life of Heaven, which he, through the organ of faith, receives into his soul, affording to it—less in quantity, but the same in kind—a taste of that bliss which shall, in a little time, be his own without measure.

This idea of the life of Heaven reaching over into time, and becoming the inheritance of the saints in the way of foretaste, is variously set forth in the Scriptures. The heirs of Christ are said to receive part of their inheritance in this life. The part which they receive is called “the first fruits of the spirit.” What were first fruits? They were the same in kind as the harvest. They were the first which ripened—a part of the harvest, and a pledge of the rest. So the first fruits which the spirit ripens in the hearts of the saints on earth are the same in kind as those of the full and final harvest which He will ripen in the complete perfection of the heavenly life. This identity of the first fruits and the harvest is thus strongly asserted by the Apostle: “If the first fruits is holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root is holy, so are the branches.” As roots and branches are under the power of one life, so grace on earth and glory in Heaven are but the lower and higher phases of the same life. Grace is glory in the bud.

Another word which is used in the Scriptures to set

forth the same idea, is the word "earnest." An earnest is a part of something given before as a pledge of the rest. Earnest-money, for instance, is a part of the price paid upon a purchase. The earnest pays part, and pledges the rest. When the saint receives the earnest of the spirit in his heart," (2 Cor. i. 22), he has part of the "purchased possession" already; and at the same time also a pledge of the rest. In the part which he has, there is sealed to him the rest, "by that Holy Spirit of promise." When the spirit begins to ripen its first fruits in your heart, then "look up, and lift up your heads: for your redemption draweth nigh." Let every one, who is conscious of the beginnings of true grace in the heart, as fruits of the Spirit, learn this joy-inspiring parable: "Behold the fig-tree, and all the trees; when they now shoot forth, ye see and know of yourselves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the Kingdom of God is nigh at hand."

Having now defined the Scriptural idea of the nature of heavenly foretastes, it is farther necessary to examine what is the basis or *medium* in which they are realized—the *organ* in the saint by which they are received—and the *factor*, or agent, who effects the blessed realization. The medium is Christ, the receptive organ is faith, and the operative agent is the Holy Spirit. All these are embodied in one declaration of the Apostle: "*In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise,* which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession." Eph. i. 13, 14.

As the full fruition of the future life is at a remove from us by time and space, there must be some MEDIUM in which such a communion with the life of Heaven is possible; for this foretaste is not imaginative merely, not a notion merely, not even a joy-inspiring hope merely, but a real *foretasting* of the substance of things hoped for.

This medium is Jesus Christ. In Him alone is it possible. He unites Heaven and earth, the finite and the infinite, God and man, in Himself. In Him there is no separation by either time or space. These are annihilated in the God-man, who is over them, and in them, and through them, the basis and bond of all. All things are in Him, and He in all. All things are through Him, and He through all. All things are for Him, and He for all. In regard to time: "He is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." In regard to space: "He gathers together in one all things in Himself, both which are in Heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him." When He was on earth He was "the Son of man which is in Heaven;" and now that He is in Heaven, He fulfils His promise, "I am with you always—I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you." He is the vine, and His saints are the branches. Whether they be in Heaven or on earth, He infuses into all the branches His life of love and bliss. Though the root and stem, and all the most fruitful branches, are on the side of the Church triumphant, yet, like the vine which dying Jacob mentions as the mystic symbol of Joseph's increase, "*its branches run over the wall!*" and saints on this side also "eat the bread which cometh down from Heaven."

Paul, in writing to the Ephesians, says, that those who are quickened from the death of sin, "are quickened together with Christ"—Christ, rising out of the power of death, is the earnest and first fruits of their resurrection; his ascension and glorification is also theirs; and the degree of their union with Him is already so much of Heaven in them. "He hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

These heavenly places are evidently on the earth; for the Apostle does not say they *will* be made to sit in them at some future time, when they shall be taken up to Heaven, but He hath already so made them to sit. This mode of expression is common in the apostolic teachings. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who *hath* blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Here again these blessings in heavenly places are said to have been already given, and they are given *in* Christ. These passages, therefore, evidently refer to those foretastes or portions of Heaven, which the saints enjoy in this life, in communion with each other and with Christ.

This sitting together of the saints in heavenly places, in which there is an allusion to the fellowship of a company of friends at a feast, is evidently intended to represent the communion of saints in the ordinances of the Church, and the heavenly feelings and emotions which are consequent upon such communion. How an earnest of Heaven may be felt in the Church on earth, and how there may be heavenly places in the Church, may be easily conceived by

attending carefully to the Scripture representations of our union with Christ, who is now in Heaven. Our union with Him, and consequently also our communion with Him, is *through the Church*. The favorite symbol used by the Apostle to set forth this mysterious and glorious union and communion is a human body, animated and pervaded in all its parts by its own life. The Head is Christ, the Body is the Church, and saints are the Members. The same life pervades all, and the communion between the Head and the Members must, of course, be through the Body. Now Christ as the Head is in Heaven, but His body the Church is part in Heaven, and part on earth; His life pervades and binds both together; He is the medium in which Heaven and earth exchange their sympathies. He is the archetype of Jacob's mystic ladder; where He is, there is Bethel—the house of God, the gate of Heaven. In the Church are fulfilled those "greater things" of which Jesus spake to Nathaniel, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see Heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." Oh blessed state of the saints who, in Christ, are thus brought quite to the verge of Heaven!

It is in the light of this union and communion with Heaven, through the Church, that we can understand the strong language of Paul to the Hebrew Christians. They were not yet in Heaven, but were still on earth in the heavenly places of the Church, and yet he speaks of them as already in communion with the heavenly assembly: "Ye ARE come unto mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly

Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant." Heb. xii. 22, 24. Here is an actual coming to, and communion with, heavenly intelligences on the part of those who were still on earth; and consequently an actual tasting before of the life, and love, and bliss, and communion of Heaven.

We must consider further the ORGAN in the saints by which these foretastes are received and realized.

Although Heaven and earth are brought together in Christ, and in the communion of the Church, in the way now described, it is evident that not all persons are conscious of this by sweet personal experience. To some who, like the carnal Jews, are bound down to a dead law, and who seek a living Christ in an empty sepulchre, among the napkin and cast-off grave-clothes, all this is a "stumbling-block." To others who, like the Greeks, are wise in their own cold conceits, it is "foolishness." In general, the carnal mind turns away from these things of the Spirit, with a polished sneer. Those dead in sin will say, Thou bringest certain strange things to our ears. The low and forbidden pleasures of sense they have tasted, and can understand those who prophesy of these. They know what it is to taste wealth, and the subtle theories of getting and holding are as plain to them as lessons for children. The path of unsanctified ambition and earthly honor, though it lie through the dust of battle, and the eddyings, and rollings, and

tumult, of popular agitation, yields to their well-trained sense a thousand blessed sweets! Take them, however, out of this ever-circling sphere of mere mundane interests, and their mournful cry is: "Ye have taken away our gods, and what have we more!"

These foretastes exist only for those who have a spiritual sense which has the proper receptivity, and is used to the tasting of heavenly gifts. These visions are not for the blind. This music of the celestial choir is not for the deaf. This life of heaven is not for the dead in sin! It is only what it really is to those who have the organ by which alone it can be perceived and realized.

"The more our spirits are enlarged on earth,
The deeper draughts they can receive of Heaven!"

What is this perceptive and receptive organ? It is FAITH. If we refer again to the passage already quoted in Eph. i. 13, 14, it will be seen that the earnest of our inheritance presupposes faith in us. "After that ye believed."

Faith is in the soul what the eye is in the body. It is the spiritual organ which assures us of the real existence of distant things. That is a masterly definition of faith which the Apostle gives: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for." What do the saints hope for? They hope for Heaven, with all its promised glorious realities. Faith is the substance of these, already existing in the heart—an earnest, a foretaste, a part of them. Faith is also "the evidence of things not seen." We see not heavenly realities, but faith is the assurance to us that they exist; and it

evidences them to us by working the substance of them into the possession of our hearts.

Because faith is the substance of Heaven in our hearts, it has also the force of consciousness to the believer. It is not merely a notional belief, not merely an intellectual conviction, not merely a floating feeling which moves our emotional nature, but it is an emotion of divine life which lies deeper in the soul than these, and includes them all—the greater includes the less. This consciousness is its own evidence. It is as sure of the real existence of those things in which it believes, as life is sure that it lives. We do not, for instance, merely believe that we live, and know that we live, and feel that we live, but there is a simple consciousness of life in us which underlies all these, and which enables us to believe, and know, and feel. So faith is the conscious life of the renewed soul. It was this consciousness of faith which John felt, when he exclaimed, “We know that we are of God”—which led him to say, “Ye have an unction (let that word be well considered,) from the Holy One.” And again, “The anointing (unction) which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but the same anointing teacheth you all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.” Here is communion with Christ, and, in Him, with the life everlasting, deeper than reason, higher than knowledge, and more constant than all emotion.

Thus faith is the soul’s spiritual sense, by which we taste of Heaven

*“Before we reach the heavenly fields,
Or walk the golden streets.”*

It is the renewed life's receptive organ — the spiritual inlet to the soul. He that looks up to Heaven in a bright starlight night, will have the glory of the starry heavens in miniature images upon the retina of his eye ; so, he who gazes upon the spiritual realities of Heaven by faith, will have their images in his spirit—no, not their *images*, for the analogy is not complete, not their images, but their “substance.” This substance is Heaven in the soul, “the earnest of our inheritance.” Thus the saint, when faith is lively and strong, is always “sitting in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

We must consider also the *factor* or *agent* who effects this blessed privilege of believers, and enables them to realize it. This is done, according to the teaching of the Apostle, by the sealing of “that Holy Spirit of promise.”

The Holy Spirit is one with Christ — hence He is sometimes called the Spirit of Christ. Hence also He dwells in Christ. But He also dwells in the saints, “What ! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you ?” Dwelling, at the same time, in Christ and in the saints, He takes of the things of Christ and shows them to His children. He quickens the communion of the saint with Christ ; and so strengthens and sanctifies his faith, as to enable him more fully to receive Christ with all his heavenly gifts.

In Christ, as we have seen, the heavenly life is transferred to the saint, faith is the organ which

receives it, the spirit seals and secures the blessings to the believing soul. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Rom. v. 5.

Hence we find that those heavenly graces, which are the ornament and joy of the saints, are called "the fruits of the spirit." These fruits are such as "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." These, in the soul, are part of the very substance of Heaven, and these are fruits of the spirit — first-fruits of Heaven. Is the love of God shed abroad in the heart? love is part of Heaven, for "all that life is love." Does the saint on earth experience spiritual joy? it is part of Heaven, for there is "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Does he experience peace? it is a part of "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding." So with all the rest of the fruits of the spirit; they are his seals in us, and "the earnest of our inheritance."

The true child of God will understand all this. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant." "In thy light shall we see light." Does it seem to any one mere cant; it will be so till "*after that ye have believed.*" Does any one skeptically deny such union and communion of the soul with Heaven? or stumble at its magnitude? to such we address, affectionately, but with point, the language of another,

"Ye brainless wits! ye baptized infidels!
Ye worse for mending! washed to fouler stains!
Archangels failed to cast this mighty sum!"

Or do you prefer the language of another :

“ There are more things in heaven and earth,
Than are dreamed of in your philosophy.”

Or, shall we bring our reply to the final tribunal thus : “ The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God : for they are foolishness unto him : neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things.” 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15.

We have now endeavored to give a scriptural representation of heavenly foretastes ; let us, in following this subject a little farther, enquire whether there is any thing in the well-authenticated experience of saints, that may be considered as a realization of this blessed privilege. We say *well-authenticated experience*, because we are aware that this, like every feature of Christian experience, has its counterfeits. It is not a rare case, we conceive, in which persons have mistaken the vaporings of mere subjective feelings, and the vanity of an excited imagination, for a blessed earnest of their inheritance. We would guard against giving the least encouragement to such wasting fanaticism as has afflicted the church, and dishonored religion, in all ages. Its manifestations are easily known as no fruits of the Spirit. Who that reflects need be told that raging passion is not love—that wild phrensy is not joy—that the most excited agitations are not peace—that making haste with violence is not long-suffering—that disorderly bodily exercise is not gentleness—that the revellings of the emotional nature are not goodness—that an onset of resolution and will, by the

power of physical force, is not faith—that the boilings of a tumultuous spirit are not meekness—and that that excess which has no bounds but its own unbridled strength, is not temperance. It needs but a little careful reflection, with an ordinary degree of spiritual discernment, to distinguish between the chaff and the wheat—between imaginations concerning Heaven, and foretastes of Heaven.

Avoiding, then, all that is wild, imaginary, fanatical, and false, in religious experience, let us see whether Scripture affords any thing like a realization of the foretastes which it describes. We find that the apostles speak at times in very glowing terms of the love of God shed abroad in the heart—of peace which passeth understanding—of joy unspeakable and full of glory—besides many other expressions which designate the dawn of Heaven in their souls.

These ordinary experiences seem at times also to have risen into the extraordinary. “I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) And I knew such a man, how that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for man to utter.” 2 Cor. xii. This was extraordinary in degree, but not in kind. The spirit of the Apostle was swallowed up and absorbed in the heavenly life of bliss, so that he forgot his body and the earth—he saw and heard only with the spirit, and so transcendently glorious were those glimpses into Heaven, that it would have been profane to make them known to such

as could not appreciate their real excellence—they had to be covered by a veil, for no ordinary Christian could have endured the blaze of excellent glory which flashed out upon the apostle's spirit from the holy of holies !

We have another instance of Heaven and earth meeting, in the experience of the saints. It was when the shekinah of celestial glory settled down, like a luminous cloud, upon Tabor, enfolding the Saviour and three of his disciples. Two glorified saints appeared in that heavenly place. The voice of God was heard there. Saints in the body, and saints out of the body, communed with each other in that element of heavenly bliss. So overwhelmingly joyous was the hour, that the disciples would fain have dwelt there forever. So sweetly impressive was the scene, that long afterwards Peter refers to this vision and communion in that “excellent glory.”

These instances are sufficient to show us *what is possible*, and what God will do for his saints whenever their own circumstances, and the occasion, are of sufficient importance to call for such encouragement. Who will say that foretastes similar to these, have not often sustained martyrs at the stake, to whom we know that the raging flames were as refreshing and pleasant as the soft fannings of the zephyr, in the summer evening twilight ?

That God graciously adapts the communication of these encouraging foretastes to the emergencies of the saints, is both reasonable and scriptural. He gives strength as the day ; and shows Himself a *very present* help in trouble. When the people are weary, and cry

out, Now, Lord, it is enough, let us die, then He shows them clusters from Eschol, and pomegranates, and figs, from the land of promise. So, in the case of the saints—when they grow weary, and their burdens press them sorely, he shows them first-fruits from Canaan; and says, Behold the earnest of your inheritance, eat and live. Often when the path of discouragement has grown too distressingly dark, “He visits them in the night,” and makes

The opening heavens around them shine,
With beams of sacred bliss.

CHAPTER V.

Foretastes of Heaven at the close of Life.

The last end
Of the good man is peace. How calm his exit!
Night-dews fall not more gently to the ground,
Nor weary worn-out winds expire so soft.

BLAIR.

WE have spoken of heavenly foretastes. We have spoken of the Medium in which they are realized; of the Organ in the saint by which they are received; and of the Agent by which the blessed realization is effected; and we have also referred to some scriptural instances of such blessed meetings of Heaven and earth, in the experiences of the saints as are involved in this idea of foretastes. A moment's reflection will lead us to believe that, as the Christian life is progressive, these foretastes become always more full, satisfying, and intensely delightful the nearer he approaches the close of life. This is manifest from those expressions with which various of the people of God, in all ages, have closed their earthly pilgrimage. This explains their willingness to be offered up, their joyful hope of Heaven, and their desire to depart. It seems proper then, that, to render our meditations

on the foretastes of Heaven complete, we should linger yet for a short time around the closing scenes of the earthly life of saints, and catch what inspiration of comfort we can from their dying words.

It is a pensive pleasantness which a Christian enjoys in walking forth amid the sober scenes of nature in the solemn stillness of the eventide. The departed day, the coming, lonely night, and the passionless scene of sweet serenity which lies around him, dispose his mind to think, and his heart to feel, aright. A similar evening scene is presented to us in the solemn retirement of the chamber of death. The day of toils and tears is now past. Sweet home feelings come over the spirit. The spirit feels the curtains, which shut out a vain and restless world, drawn as by unseen hands around it, and in that sense of peace and security which passeth all understanding, it awaits the repose of death—a repose which knows a blissful waking in the morning of eternal day. How blessed is that place where the saint prepares to unclothe himself of the habiliments of earth, to rest forever in the bosom of his God! The very air is wisdom, and every whisper we hear, is the language of a higher sphere. From the whole past life, now just closing, there come blessed recollections, as messengers of peace, to make the scene hopeful; and, from before, dawn down upon the departing spirit the smiles of heavenly welcome. The evening scene of the saint is blest, and gives blessing. Let us go with him to the portal, and our spirits shall drink in the holy light, which streams out upon us through the bright vista as he passes beyond our sight.

Thus on he moves to meet his latter end,
Angels around befriending virtue's friend ;
Sinks to the grave with unperceived decay,
While resignation gently slopes the way ;
And, all his prospect bright'ning to the last,
His Heaven commences ere the world be past.

It may be remarked that closing scenes of life have two aspects, bright or dark, calm or terrible, according to the character of him who dies. When a mortal draws near to death, there appears, as once to Israel, a pillar to guide him; but as that pillar which led Israel was "darkness" on the side of the Egyptians, and "light" towards those whom God loved and led, so is the guide which lifts the veil and beckons to the dying. The Jordan has an instinctive sense of who it is that approaches, and prepares accordingly to receive him. If it is an enemy of God, it swells, and foams, and frowns, and throws high its gaping waves to take him fearfully into its cold embrace; if it is one whom God loves, its surface grows serene, and anon breaks into smiles, as the features upon the face of a sleeping infant. When Jonah entered the ship, "the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against him," and he said: "I know that for my sake this tempest is upon us." When the Saviour entered, the sea felt his presence, "the wind ceased, and there was a great calm!" Blessed are they that are with him! With joy will they exclaim, as they go down with him into death's dark waters: "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!" To the righteous there ariseth a light in the darkness. In their experience is the prophecy fulfilled: "It shall

come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light."

It is to the evening scenes of CHRISTIANS ripe for glory, that we desire to refer. We do this, in order to show that the event which closes the earthly career of the saint—that event which seems at a distance the saddest and gloomiest, is really, when it approaches, the fullest of bliss, and the richest in the glorious hopes and foretastes of a blessed immortality.

Who has not observed that there is exhibited in the experience of aged, ripe Christians, "in the meditative evening of life," that spirit so beautifully patriarchal and prophetic, which is a prelibation of the coming rest?

"The sunset of life gives them mystical lore,
And coming events cast their shadows before."

The aged Christian sits, with holy satisfaction, amid the rich fruits which drop around him in the autumn of his days; and, like the natural autumn, the falling of life's leaves, and the fading of life's flowers, only serve to reveal the abundance of golden fruit which blesses his soul with plenty. Oh! what scenes of peace lie, in the soft light from Heaven, over the realms of his soul! It is the dawn of Heaven, into which his life is silently merging, even before the shades of his evening have been tinged with any darkness from the shadow of death. His body grows feeble, and his child-like simplicity is called by the world "dotage," but wisdom takes a deeper view, and says: "The second childhood of a saint is the early infancy of a happy immortality." Shall not the child just going to its father, from whom it has been sepa-

rated by a long life of wanderings, manifest, as it draws near him, its childlike spirit! "Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein." But he that does so receive it shall enter therein. So we infer.

O the aged, venerable saint, upon whose mild countenance is reflected the soft holy dawn of Heaven! we more than love, we reverence him. His very deadness to all the affinities of earth, makes us feel that he already belongs to a higher sphere! We linger around his arm-chair as around an oracle, and our spirits bow and worship in the sacred element of mystery which breathes around him. A thousand times blessed is the close of his life, so full of hope and immortality. It has been beautifully said, that "even when the brilliancy of reason's sunset yields to the advancing gloom, there is an indescribable beauty haunting the old man still, if in youth and vigor his soul was conversant with truth; and even when the chill of night is upon him, his eye seems to rest upon the glories for awhile departed, or looks off into the stars, and reads in them his destiny, with a gladness as quiet and as holy as their light. The soul that can rise above the clouds of earth, can always behold the infinity of Heaven, and perhaps every rightly taught man, before God takes him, ascends to a Pisgah of his own, from whence to look farewell to the wilderness he has passed in the leadings of Jehovah's right hand, and to catch a glimpse of the promised land lying in the everlasting orient before him." From afar comes a voice to his spirit's ear. He knows the voice, and with

an unction of joyful obedience he bounds towards the place whence it calls, exclaiming

Thou it was,
When the world's din and passion's voice was still,
Calling the wanderer home !

Bunyan's land of Beulah, though imaginary, is not all imagination—not a mere fancy sketch. It is a true and beautiful embodiment of that privilege of saints ripe for glory, which we have just discussed. There is a peculiar pleasant quietude steals over the heart of the laborer on Saturday eve—it is an adumbration of the coming rest. There is a peculiar serenity brooding over nature just before the setting sun; it is the precursor of the holy quiet night. These may serve as images of that mellow dawn of heavenly bliss, which irradiates the pilgrim's soul when he enters that border of Heaven which merges over into time, and lies in unearthly glory along the evening side of this mortal life.

“Now I saw in my dream, that by this time the pilgrims were got over the Enchanted Grounds, and entered into the country of Beulah, whose air was very sweet and pleasant; the way lying directly through it, they solaced themselves there for a season. Yea, here they heard continually the singing of birds, and saw every day the flowers appear in the earth, and heard the voice of the turtle in the land. In this country the sun shines night and day: wherefore this was beyond the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and also out of the reach of Giant Despair; neither could they from this place so much as see Doubting Castle. Here they were within sight of the city they were going to;

also here met them some of the inhabitants thereof; for in this land the shining ones commonly walked, because it was upon the borders of Heaven. Here they heard voices from out of the city, loud voices, saying, ‘Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh! Behold, his reward is with him!’

“Now, as they walked in this land, they had more rejoicing than in parts more remote from the kingdom to which they were bound; and drawing near to the city, they had yet a more perfect view thereof. It was builded of pearls and precious stones, also the streets thereof were paved with gold; so that, by reason of the natural glory of the city, and the reflection of the sunbeams upon it, Christian with desire fell sick; Hopeful had also a fit or two of the same disease: wherefore here they lay by it a while, crying out because of their pangs, ‘If you see my Beloved, tell him that I am sick of love.’”

What a picture is this! as true in its theology, as it is beautiful in its poetry. This lovely land represents that blessed time, shorter or longer, in which saints tarry in their last sickness, waiting for Israel’s chariots, and having a great desire to depart. It represents

“The chamber where the good man meets his fate,
That’s privileged beyond the common walks
Of virtuous life, quite on the verge of Heaven.”

His prospects are now clear and glorious beyond conception. The dawn of Heaven is in his heart. The wearisome, dull, Enchanted Ground of the earthly pilgrimage is now passed. The darkness and fear of Death are left behind. Despair and Doubt are not so

much as seen from this happy region. Shining ones, unseen by all except the dying saint, are hovering around. This is the border of the king's country, the earnest of the saint's eternal inheritance !

Listen to Dr. Payson on his dying bed. "When I read Bunyan's description of the land of Beulah, where the sun shines and the birds sing day and night, I used to doubt whether there was such a place; but now my own experience has convinced me of it, and it infinitely transcends all my previous conceptions. I think the happiness I enjoy is similar to that enjoyed by glorified spirits before the resurrection." Again: "I can find no words to express my happiness. I seem to be swimming in a river of pleasure, which is carrying me on to the great fountain." A grey-headed member of his church coming into his room, saluted him, "Watchman, what of the night?" — "I should think it was about noon-day," was the reply of the dying saint. In this flood of bliss he floated away to the full fruition of the saints on high !

Christian biography is rich in examples of such rapturous and peaceful foretastes as often characterize the closing scene of the eminently pious. We can only give a few specimens of such as are recorded, which, we are sure, will call up in the mind of every reader similar instances, witnessed in more humble walks of life; for who is it that has never seen some Christian

"With glory in his view!"

Perhaps the most remarkable example of heavenly foretastes before death, is that of the deeply pious and devoted John Janeway. "I am, through mercy, quite

above the fears of death, and am going unto Him whom I love above life. O that I could let you know what I now feel! O that I could show you what I see! O the glory! the unspeakable glory that I behold! My heart is full, my heart is full; Christ smiles and I cannot choose but smile. Can you find it in your heart to stop me, who am now going to the complete and eternal enjoyment of Christ? Would you keep me from my crown? The arms of my blessed Saviour are open to embrace me; the angels stand ready to carry my soul into his bosom. O did you but see what I see, you would all cry out with me, ‘How long, dear Lord? come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!’ Such were among the last words of this departing saint.

Remarkable also was the closing scene and the last words of Mr. Halyburton. After expressing, in the intensity of joyful desire, his willingness to depart, he exclaimed, in perfect rapture: “This is a miracle, pain without pain! And this not the fancy of a man disordered in his brain, but of one lying in full composure: O blessed be God that ever I was born. O if I were where he is!” When he drew still nearer to death, he said to those around him: “When I fall so low that I am not able to speak, I will show you a *sign* of triumph, when I am near glory, if I am able.” This he did, by lifting up and clapping his hands in the most triumphant joy, when he was speechless and in the agonies of death! Thus the spirit, when those organs with which it is wont to express its joy, are numb under the influence of death, is still able to move the limbs of the body, and thus wave victory to those it leaves behind.

Something similar to this is connected with the martyr-death of Mr. Hawkes. "He was entreated by his friends to give them some token that the fire was not so intolerable but that a man might keep his mind quiet and patient—he assented; and, if so, he promised he would lift his hands above his head before he died. An eye-witness states that at the stake he mildly addressed himself to the flames, and when his speech was taken away, and his skin drawn all together, and his fingers consumed, so that all thought him dead, he, in remembrance of his promise, suddenly lifted up his burning hands and clapped them together three times, as if in great joy!"*

When Jchn Knox, the English Reformer, was asked, after he could speak no more, for a sign that he remembered the promises of God with joy, he raised his hand, and expired. Dr. Nelson, in his work on Infidelity, relates an instance of an aged and exemplary Christian, who was drawing near to death, but, at first, without much visible sign of joy. An anxious daughter, who sat by him, requested of him, that if at any time after he could speak and hear no more, a foretaste of heavenly bliss should be granted him, he should give a certain token of it by his hand. "After his senses were all closed, and his breath became obstructed, and he was plainly at the gate of eternity, he gave the token! and a smile of exultation lighted up his countenance." Such tokens may safely be taken, not indeed as voices of such as come back from the dead, but as the truthful testimony of God's favoured, who express, yet within the reach of mortal

* Soul and Body, by George Moore, M.D., p. 267.

ken, the unearthly bliss of redeemed spirits when the dawn of eternal blessedness begins to break upon their enraptured vision. O let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.

As they draw near to their eternal home:
Leaving the old, both worlds they view.

Dr. Doddridge, when near his end, said: "Such delightful and transporting views of the heavenly world as my Father is now indulging me with, no words can express."—"Light breaks in! Light breaks in! Hallelujah!" were among the dying words of the pious Blumhart of Basle. Dr. Bateman, a Christian Physician, said, a little before he died: "I can hardly distinguish whether this is languor or drowsiness which has come over me; but it is a very agreeable feeling;" and, dying, he exclaimed, "What glory! the angels are waiting for me! Lord Jesus, receive my soul! Farewell!" James Bainham, a martyr, when his arms and legs were half consumed, exclaimed: "Ye look for miracles! Here, now, ye may see one. This fire is a bed of roses to me!" Addison, the English Poet, when near death, called a young man, who was rather indifferent to religion, to his bedside, and while he pressed his hand with tender affection, said to him: "Behold with what peace a Christian can die!"

Such language reminds one of the swan-song, which is sweetest when dying. It is like some of that language of rapture which we find in the Scripture, that trembled, like a thrill of heavenly joy, upon the tongues of saints ready to depart. Like that of

Jacob: "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord." Like that of Simeon, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Like that of Paul: "I am now ready to be offered, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

How are these joyful sensations produced in the departing spirit? They must be the fruit of some influence from another world. The circumstances of dying saints are often such as would have a tendency to fill them with gloom instead of joy. This is especially the case in such examples of martyrs as we have referred to; but, even in ordinary cases, the idea of death and the grave, frequently excessive bodily pain, and weeping afflicted friends, we should think would rather depress than elate one already worn by sickness and pain. Yet these examples show it to be just the reverse. There is joy where we would expect gloom. There are smiles where we would expect tears. There is the song of the victor, shouted forth in unearthly rapture, in the midst of devouring flames!

Why should not saints, "on the verge of Heaven," share a foretaste of it? They have the assurance that the Comforter shall abide with them always, and why not peculiarly amid the trying scenes of death? He, as a spirit, has direct access to the spirit of saints, to fill them with His consolation and peace. Beyond doubt, also, the soul, in its last moments of stay upon the earth, is so far free from its inward affinities with the body, as to see already the glorious realities of that world which it is just entering. Thus Stephen, the first Christian martyr, when his soul was about

being stoned out of his body, “being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into Heaven, and saw the glory of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.”

It is also perfectly scriptural to believe that those allusions to angels, so common in the death-bed scenes of the pious, are real visions. They are to gather the harvest, according to the Saviour’s parable. They carried the beggar into Abraham’s bosom. They are ministering spirits unto the heirs of salvation; and, as such, are certainly at no time more needed by the saint than at that hour when his spirit is about to enter the untried scenes of another life. At the moment of death, when all earthly friends must retire, we may safely assume, from what light we have in the Scripture on the subject, that the spirit enters the circle of higher beings, and shares in their sympathies and offices of love. “In the pause of unutterable desire, the soul forgets the body: and it is then that spirits some slight remove above us perceive our need, and by divine appointment confer on us the comfort of their light, by impressing on us a deeper knowledge of the intentions of the Deity, and a brighter insight of his love to ourselves and to all men. Thus worlds above worlds of varied intelligences are bound together in the communion of necessity and assistance.”

We fully accord with the judicious sentiment of Dr. Burgess: “We must not be bold in speaking of what none but the dying can have seen and felt; but certainly there is enough to persuade us, that many of those who, with clear minds and organs unoppressed,

approach the shadowy barrier between two worlds, do breathe some airs from that which is beyond ; have a solemn, joyous experience till then, in that degree, quite unknown ; and perceive, as if within a curtain, the motions of forms, whose outlines and features they cannot discern." These experiences of dying saints are of course various in their degree ; some are rapturous and ecstatic, while others are more calm and peaceful. Some have glimpses of Heaven, vouchsafed them, while they, departing, have still sufficient strength to express their feelings ; while others, as in the cases mentioned, can only yet give a faint token that joy is breaking upon them through the gloom of death. In this respect too there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. Sure it is, that in one form or other, the Comforter is doing his work at the heart.

Such a joyful, peaceful end is to be desired. Not only because it tends to take away gloom from the prospect of death, but also because of its unspeakable blessedness to the dying saint. In that hour when flesh and heart fail, what must be the joy of such a portion ! It is desirable, too, on account of those who stand in tears around our dying bed. It will take away much of the bitterness of their sorrow and bereavement, to see that our death is full of peace and hope. Their farewell looks and words will lose much of their mournfulness when we see their countenances lighted up with an expression which seems to say, "I am going home!" Oh ! the deepest of all sorrow is sorrow without hope. The sweetest of all consolation in the hour of bereavement, is the assu-

rance that the spirit of the departed rests—rests forever in the bosom of its God. Afterwards, too, it is the pleasantest of all the duties of love to drop the tears of affection upon the grave of one whose spirit we know to be in the Heavenly Home.

CHAPTER VI.

Degrees of Happiness in Heaven.

If loftier post superior state declare ;
More virtuous acts if ampler meeds require ;
If brightest crowns on noblest prowess light,
And well-sown fields a fuller harvest bear ;
If thrones, dominions, princedoms, powers that are,
Which God's inferior hosts excel in might ;
If day's bright orb outshine the lamp of night,
And Hesper's radiance the remotest star :
Then shall the younger brethren of the sky,
If right I scan the records of their fate, . . .
In varied ranks of social harmony
God's mount encircle. Glorious is the state
Ev'n of the lowest there : but seats more nigh
The Sovereign throne his greater servants wait.

MANT.

THE question, whether there are degrees of happiness in Heaven, has been thought, by some, more curious than useful. This is a common mode, to which Christians of loose spiritual habit resort, for the purpose of putting aside those points of pious inquiry which lie a little beyond the range of the most common reflection. We cannot agree that this is a useless inquiry. If superior blessedness and glory are the

reward, in Heaven, of the attainment of superior holiness and excellence on the earth, then it is a practical question, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Neither is this inquiry in the least presumptuous. If it is curiosity which incites us to the inquiry, it is a curiosity raised by strong hints, if not by direct declarations, of Scripture; and is therefore of the same kind which moves the minds of angels to bend over and pry into the mysteries of redemption. That is a blessed curiosity which prompts the spirit to holy earnestness and deep inquiry into the nature of eternal things—which waits, in the attitude of earnest hope and desire, to catch each ray of light which God may please to let fall upon its future destiny. As the sleepless eye waits for the morning, and as the pious Israelite gazed upon the vanishing shadows of the old economy, in the hope of catching some faint gleam of the promised glory, so does the eye of Christian faith look forward through the “glass darkly,” to know what it can of the things to come. The irrepressible energies of a soul animated with the hopes of an endless life beyond death, instinctively sends its voice of ardent inquiry through the darkness which hangs over the tomb, exclaiming, “Watchman, what of the night? — what of the night?” If revelation, or reason enlightened by revelation, returns but a faint answer of hope and promise, the spirit joyfully takes up the note and hums it for its comfort, as the pilgrim in a strange land sings softly the song of his childhood to while

away the tedious hours, and shorten the dreary miles of absence.

Let us now attend to a few considerations, from which it appears that there will be different degrees of happiness in Heaven.

The future life, though different from this, will be a natural continuation of our present life. As the child, when born into this world, continues the same being it was before, and as each successive stage of its being, through infancy, childhood, manhood, and age, is but a continuation of its former life, only rising higher by regular development, so also at death, when it is unclothed of the mortal, and clothed upon with the immortal, it will still be the same being, advanced, it is true, wonderfully, but yet not violently; on the contrary, in silent, harmonious, natural, and strict accordance with the laws and process of its previous life. The future life will be but the onward flow of this. "When the soul leaves the body, it will retain the consciousness of whatever passed within it while here upon earth. It carries along with it, into the future world, the ideas, the knowledge, the habits, which it possessed here. And so it takes also good and evil from this life into the next, as its own property, and there receives the fruit of it."* Thus this and the future life are connected like cause and effect—like sowing and reaping—like the first-fruits and the harvest. The happiness or misery of the future world is always represented in the way of direct result and consequence of this life, the one standing in natural and necessary relation to the other. Hence it is evident

* Knapp's Theology, § 160, II.

that a spirit will occupy a higher or lower stage in the future world, according as it attained in this world a higher or lower degree of excellence.

It is known that saints die, whose gracious attainments, at the time of their death, differ widely. One has faith that triumphs in its strength, another has faith like the bruised reed and the smoking flax, able only to exclaim with his dying breath, "Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief." Again, one as a strong man, has knowledge in spiritual experience that has "come to visions and revelations of the Lord;" another, as a babe in Christ, has only a feeble consciousness of the gracious life—one has a spirit burning with love, under the light of God's countenance, like a seraph—another feels scarcely an ember of heavenly fire amid the heart's cold unbelief, and seeks with streaming eyes of penitence for but one smile of acceptance from God. Both are saved. The one is taken as in triumph, after whom the survivors cry in astonishment, like Elijah, the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof! the other is saved as by fire! To suppose that these two saints, in whom exists such a difference in degree of spiritual development when they leave the world, will commence their eternal career in Heaven equally high in bliss, would compel us to suppose that the development of the one is *set back*, or that that of the other is violently and arbitrarily set forward. Either of these suppositions is contrary to the principle above laid down, in regard to the relation which this and the future life sustain to each other, as well as a contradiction of all the analogies of life with which we are acquainted.

God confers different degrees of honor and happiness upon his saints in the church on earth. Some, a proper use of His grace has exalted and made honorable, so that their names were spoken with reverence while they lived, and after their death are still embalmed in the most grateful remembrance. Now, when we remember that the church on earth and in Heaven is the same in nature, only different in degree, is it not natural to expect that, when those whom God has honored on earth are transplanted into the triumphant church, they will be crowned with favor in the same proportion? Shall those who on earth are to be esteemed with "double honor," lose that distinction by going up higher? As, therefore, God in the church below confers gifts differing, and gives honorable standing and superior enjoyment corresponding to the measure of those gifts, we see, in the nature of things, every reason to believe that this order will not be deranged in the church above. God, in glory, will not contradict the methods of his grace here.

The church in this world is a nursery of preparation for the church on high; if saints, when removed to the church above, must necessarily stand on the same level, it would seem strange that God does not graciously endow them with the same preparation in this world. Their standing in Heaven is of grace, and their preparation on earth for that standing is of grace: now, if it is absolutely required by the nature of grace that their standing in Heaven be alike, then a similar necessity would require that their preparation on earth be alike. But grace on earth exists in different degrees; therefore, that same grace intends

that those degrees shall be continued in Heaven. God's grace, though sovereign, is not arbitrary, and cannot contradict itself in passing its subjects into glory.

That there are degrees of happiness in Heaven, may be inferred from God's goodness and justice, as these commend themselves to enlightened reason. The greatest and most distinguished saints endure in this world the greatest privations, sufferings, self-denial, and contradiction of sinners. An ordinary and quiet professor of religion, though he may be a true Christian, can pass through this probationary life meeting with comparatively little occasion to endure hardships for Christ's sake, while those whose lot falls in more troublesome times and circumstances, being called to greater ardor and zeal, are killed all the day long — are in stripes, in perils, in imprisonments and bonds, harassed on all sides, resisting unto blood, and bearing about in their bodies the marks of the Lord Jesus ! Is it not agreeable to what we believe concerning the justice and goodness of God, that those who thus endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ shall receive a corresponding reward, and that those who suffer much with Him shall be more highly glorified with Him ? Not that these labors and sufferings merit any reward, but that they are the measure of it. Inasmuch as they suffered and labored for the least of his saints, they did it unto Him ; and, though it was but the giving of a cup of cold water, it was a deed that will not be overlooked in the reward.

Happiness in this world — and it must be the same in the world to come — arises, to a great extent, from

a remembrance of the good which we have been enabled to accomplish. The reflection that in serving God we have also made some of His creatures happy, brings to the heart a calm and pure joy. If, therefore, our good done has been much, our joy in remembering it will be much ; if it has been little, our joy must be less. What a world of joy crowds around the aged pilgrim's dying couch, when he can look back upon a long and well-spent life ! In like manner, we may suppose, he who can, from the heights of glory, look down upon a useful life spent on earth, and have the Saviour himself point out to him those naked whom he clothed, those hungry whom he fed, those sick and imprisoned whom he visited, it must swell his heart with joy unspeakable and full of glory. True, the saint who has been less useful will be happy too, but his happiness, though also eternal and to him full, must nevertheless be less wide and intense.

Will not Paul, who was counted worthy to suffer so much for Christ, be happier, when he reviews from his seat in glory the fortunes of his eventful life, than the thief who became a believer upon the cross, who was saved as by fire, and who, besides his repentance and acceptance of Christ's mercy, had perhaps not one good deed to follow him ? It may be said that the joy of the great Apostle, equally with that of the thief, will consist in adoring that condescending love which snatched him from the jaws of hell ; this will no doubt be one element in his bliss to which the other will be added. He must behold, with exceeding delight, the still increasing effects of his wonderful ministry. The same with other eminent Christians.

It is in the highest degree reasonable to suppose that the celebrated saints of Bible history will receive in Heaven superior honor and glory. God, with emphasis, calls himself the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob. Some of them have received distinguishing favors from God; such were Enoch, Elijah, and Moses. Enoch and Elijah were translated without seeing death; and Elijah and Moses were made the embassy of Heaven to greet Jesus and his disciples on the glorious Tabor of transfiguration. These are glimpses through the veil, which assure us, that the eminence which distinguished saints enjoyed in grace, has passed with them into glory; and it is in accordance with the strictest logic, to regard them as enjoying also that wider range of felicity which must result from their stations of superior honor.

Moreover, if there is joy among the angels over one sinner that repents, will not such saints as have wrought mightily for God and good by their writings, join in that joy when they behold souls, awakened and allured to paths of piety, coming from the east and west, north and south, to sit down with the saints in the Kingdom of Heaven? When they see souls happy, as the fruits of their toils and tears, it must swell their hearts with joy, while

“Their tongues break out in unknown strains,
And sing surprising grace.”

According to Scripture, there are degrees of punishment and misery in hell; this, in the way of analogy, furnishes us with a strong consideration in favor of degrees of happiness in Heaven.

We are told that it shall be *more tolerable* for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for those cities in which the Saviour's mighty works were done. Those who sin against light shall share a deeper condemnation. The heathen, who have sinned without the law, though they perish, they perish without the law — intimating that they shall perish less severely. “And that servant which knew his lord’s will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with *many* stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with *few* stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.” Luke xii. 47, 48. We are also asked, that if “he that despised Moses’s law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses; of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?” Heb. x. 28, 29.

The justice of God seems to require — and reason approves of it — that those monsters of wickedness, with which the earth has been cursed in all ages, should drink a deeper draught of sorrow in the future world than those whose wickedness has been more negative, and the effects of whose iniquities have been more closely confined to themselves. It is reasonable that he who ruins himself only, should not be considered equally guilty with him who, with himself, ruins also a family, a community, or a nation, and whose influence for wo is felt through many generations.

From considerations like these, we may strongly infer the existence of degrees of happiness in glory. When we see that, according to Scripture, there are degrees of misery in hell, and are informed at the same time that, *in general*, men in the future life shall be rewarded according to their works, we are forced to the conclusion, that as there are degrees in hell, so must there be degrees in Heaven. The ways of God are equal. If the *very wicked* are punished more, then the *very good* must be rewarded more.

We have positive Scripture testimony to present in favor of degrees in the future felicity of the saints, for which, however, we desire first to prepare the way, by meeting some objections, which, if not removed, throw a veil of indefiniteness over passages which will otherwise prove clear and decisive.

It has been argued that degrees in Heaven would have a tendency to interfere with the happiness of those who are least, rendering them dissatisfied in their place. It must, however, be remembered that neither jealousy nor covetousness have place in the heavenly mansions, and consequently such differences cannot be sources of discontent. We do not now envy the angels, who are above us, and holier and happier than we. We will not envy superior intelligences among the principalities of Heaven, into whose society we shall be introduced. Being filled with the spirit of pure benevolence, we shall bless God for the bliss of all the happy spirits that are round about Him.

Besides this, as this difference of happiness springs for the most from the different *capacities* of souls, and not entirely from things external, the difference

may not even be perceived or noticed by the saints. We may measure the sources of enjoyment which our friend possesses, but we cannot so easily know to what extent *he* has power really to appropriate them; that depends upon his inward being. In like manner, in Heaven, sources of happiness may be full and inexhaustible, but the extent to which any saint enjoys them depends upon his receptive faculty. A philosopher and a peasant are walking together in a delightful grove, on a luxuriant spring morning; both are drinking in the richness of the scene, but what a different world really reveals itself to the former, from that which is seen by the latter! The peasant sees beauty and enjoys it, but it is not with so wide a range; nor does his heart feel the bliss which it inspires, with the same intensity. Yet he is happy and satisfied; and, no doubt, supposes himself to be as happy as his refined and intelligent companion. When it rains, more drops fall upon the wide-spreading oak than in the cup of the violet, and yet both are watered; so, when glory streams from all the heavens upon the spirits of the saints, those of widest capacities will receive most, while all will be fully blest, and fully satisfied. Or, to use an illustration of the old divines, vessels of different sizes may all be full, and yet some will contain much more than others. "Does not the sparrow praise the Lord its maker upon the ridge of a cottage, chirping in its native perfection? And yet the lark advances in her flight and her song as far above the sparrow, as the clouds are above the house-top."

It has also been said that the gift of salvation is

the same to all, and that cannot convey more nor less — that Christ gives to all alike the purchase of His blood, alike justification, Heaven, eternal life, a kingdom, a crown, harps and psalms ; and that, therefore, what Heaven involves is the same to all. This argument proves too much, and therefore proves nothing. For saints in this life are already all justified and redeemed, so that there is no more any condemnation to them ; and yet the saints are far from being equal in grace and happiness, in this life. Besides, as has already been remarked, Heaven will be alike to all, and yet, on account of their various capacities, all will not be alike in it. The Bible is alike to all saints, and yet all are not to the same extent blest in its truths. An experienced saint will drink draughts deep and glorious, which one less experienced does not taste at all. Those that are strong find in it strong meat, while babes in Christ find milk, and yet it is the same Bible to all. So Heaven will be to all eternal life, salvation, a kingdom, and every thing else which God promises, and yet these will be enjoyed in various degrees. It is the different degrees of grace which measure the different degrees of glory.*

In addition to these difficulties, to which we have

* If the vision of God constitute the blessedness of the future world, then they whose spiritual eye is most enlightened, will drink in most of his glory ; then, since only like can know like, all advances which are here made in humility, in holiness, in love, are a polishing of the mirror, that it may reflect more distinctly the divine image ; a purging of the eye, that it may see more clearly the divine glory, an enlarging of the vessel, that it may receive more amply of the divine fullness.—*Trench on the Parables*, p. 147.

just now attended, it has been thought that Scripture itself discountenances degrees. There are several passages which *seem*, at first sight, to conflict with the doctrine of a difference in the rewards of Heaven; but it will be found, on a closer examination, that their bearing in that direction is only apparent.

The parable of the laborers in the vineyard seems, at first sight, to teach that whatever may have been the pious labors of saints in this life, their rewards will be equal in Heaven. Matt. xx. 1, 16. Here the Kingdom of Heaven is likened unto a householder who hired laborers for his vineyard; some were hired in the morning, some at the third, some at the sixth, and some at the ninth hour. When the evening came, and payment was made, they received *every one a penny*. Those who had been hired first supposed that they should have received more, because they had borne the heat and burden of the day, but they received only like those who began at the eleventh hour, every one a penny.

"It is not," says Dr. Watts, "the design of this parable to represent the final rewards of the saints at the day of Judgment, but to show that the nation of the Jews, who had been called to be the people of God above a thousand years before, and had borne the burden and heat of the day, *i. e.* the toil and bondage of many ceremonies, should have no preference in the esteem of God above the Gentiles, who were called at the last hour, or at the end of the Jewish dispensation." This parable was related for the purpose of illustrating what is said in the last verse of the preceding chapter: "But many that are first shall be

last, and the last shall be first." The Jews were called first, but the truth of the parable is now illustrated in the fact that the Gentile world, which was last called, have received the greatest amount of good from the gospel: while few Jews have believed, myriads of Gentiles have received the Saviour and his salvation; and the Scriptures seem to teach that the fullness of the Gentiles shall be called in before the children of Abraham will return by faith to their inheritance. Thus, then, the last are first. The Gentiles could well say, when asked why they stand idle, "because no man has hired us;" but as soon as they were called, they came. This entitled them equally to salvation with the Jews, for their faith and obedience were immediate and full. In short, the parable reproves that spirit of Jewish pride which was not willing that the Gentiles should share in the blessings of the Saviour's kingdom, because they had not gone through a long course of legal and ceremonial discipline, as the Jews had. They thought that they should have received more—that is, because they had deserved it by long labor, not understanding that salvation is not of merit, but of grace.

The parable of the talents, (Matt. xxv. 14–31,) also, by misconstruction may be made to carry a seeming opposition to the doctrine of degrees in Heaven. The servant that had five talents gained other five, and the one that received two gained other two: but the reward is equal: to each one he says: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joys of thy lord."

On this we remark that the reward is properly equal, because both alike doubled their talents. The one who had two, gained as much, *according to the number of talents he had received*, as the one who had five. The reward is not according to the number of talents given, but according to the *faithfulness* with which they were used. "Thou hast been *faithful* over a few things." Not the talents, but the *proportion of increase* is the measure of reward, and this was equal in both. Blessed truth! Our talents are from God; if he gives us only one, and we are faithful over that one, we are as acceptable as if we had received an hundred, for over an hundred we could not be more than faithful. If the servant that had received one talent, instead of hiding it, had put it to increase, his reward would have been equal with the rest.

The declaration that there is "no respect of persons with God," (Rom. ii. 11), has no reference at all to this point. The Apostle shows that all men are inexcusable: that Jews and Gentiles are in the same condemnation of sin, and that He will render to each and all according to their deeds. If it bear at all on the subject, it is in favor of degrees; for, if those who are least of all saints should be exalted to the same degree of honor and happiness as those who have been greatest, then it would seem as if God were partial, and a respecter of persons. God is no respecter of persons, but He has told us that He is a respecter of works and of character, and that He will reward every man "according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

If there should be any doubts on the reader's mind

as to the correctness of the exposition of these passages, as now given, such doubts must yield to those passages which are plainly positive. Such passages we will now present.

All those passages of Scripture which declare that at the day of Judgment God will render to all men *according to their works*, may be cited as bearing directly and plainly in favor of different degrees of reward in Heaven. Such are Matt. xvi. 27; Rom. ii. 6; 1 Cor. iii. 8-16; Rev. ii. 23, xx. 12. It is also said, Rev. xiv. 13, of the dead who die in the Lord, that "their works do follow them." That this has reference to a reward according to their works is evident, for it is said, "they rest from their labors," and "their works," — that is, the good which their labors have done, *follow* them. These works do not go before them as a merit, but they follow after them as an evidence of their worthiness, and as marks to distinguish them forever as the faithful of the Lord.

The connection between our labors and sufferings for Christ in this life, and our reward for them in Heaven is represented as being the same as that between sowing and reaping. "He which soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully." 2 Cor. ix. 6. The Apostle, in the context of this passage, is urging them to liberality in contributing for the relief of poor saints, and assures them that they shall be rewarded according to their liberality. Now it is plain that he did not promise them merely a temporal reward, for this would have been holding up to them a mere worldly motive. When he tells them, therefore, that if they sow boun-

tifully they shall also reap bountifully, he must have reference to that reaping which is at the end of the world. That this is his meaning is evident from what he farther tells them, that it is written of the bountiful man, "He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness *remaineth forever.*" Still farther does this prove to be his meaning, from his prayer that God would increase the *fruits* of their righteousness — what can we understand by the fruits of their righteousness but their reward in Heaven? He prays that this fruit may be *increased* for them.

A similar argument is derived from that beautiful Psalm, 126. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless return again, bringing his sheaves with him." Bringing his sheaves with him! He shall return to the bosom of his God at the end of his earthly toils, richly laden with the fruits of his labors. Go then, ye faithful few who are toiling wearily along the narrow way of duty, scatter the seeds of life richly, and water them with your tears; when the great harvest shall come, you shall gather your sheaves and go rejoicing home. "God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love." Go gather jewels for your crown when you shall receive a kingdom. He that winneth souls is wise. Of those whom you are the instrument of saving, you can say, at the day of Judgment, with the Apostle: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy." 1 Thess. ii. 19, 20. With the Apostle you can rejoice in hope

of a crown in Heaven, in which the souls you have been the means of saving, shall be set as shining gems of honor.

The Saviour says, in Matt. v. 19, "Whosoever shall break one of the least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of Heaven: but whosoever shall do, and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of Heaven." In Matt. xi. 11, it is said that "he that is least in the kingdom of Heaven," is greater than John the Baptist. On this last passage, Henry says, it teaches that "there are degrees of glory in Heaven, some that are less than others there." If even we interpret these passages as referring to Christ's kingdom on the earth, which is sometimes called the kingdom of Heaven, they still teach that there are degrees of honor and grace in the church on earth, and this leaves us still the strong inference that, if the saints are rewarded in Heaven "according to their works" on earth, there must still continue to be the same difference in glory as there is in grace. Those greatest here will be greatest there, and those least here will be least there. The Saviour, in that scene which is laid immediately at the final Judgment, and which must therefore refer to the rewards of Heaven, speaks of the "*least* of these as his brethren." Matt. xxv. 40.

When the rich young man went away from the Saviour sadly, because he was not willing to give his money to the poor, that he might have treasures in Heaven, Peter reminds the Saviour that he and the other disciples had left all to follow Him, and asks what their reward shall be. "And Jesus said unto

them, verily, I say unto you, That ye who have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Matt. xix. 27, 28; Luke xxii. 28, 31. This certainly teaches that the Apostles shall share a peculiar reward; and that not in this world, for here they had nothing before them but sufferings for Christ's sake, but it shall be bestowed upon them "when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory." "Our Lord," says SCOTT, "assured the apostles, that they who had followed him in the regeneration, should at length be advanced and honored in a peculiar manner. They will be his assessors in judgment; the world and the church will be judged according to their doctrine; and they will appear distinguished in an especial manner from all their brethren in Christ." HENRY on this passage says; "There are higher degrees of glory for those that have done and suffered most." What else can the passage mean?

In Matt. x. 41, we read: "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward." Whatever it may be that we are to understand by the reward of a prophet or righteous man, it must be a reward peculiar to saints of that character, and different from that which belongs to ordinary saints. If it is not something different and superior, there is no meaning in the promise, and it cannot, in that case, be regarded as presenting a special motive to kindness and charity.

It clearly implies, that the reward of a prophet, and that of a common righteous man, are different in degree. What was it that aided the prophets, mentioned in Hebrews xi, in the midst of cruel mockings, scourgings, torture, and sorrow, but the promise “that they should obtain a *better* resurrection.”

In first Corinthians, chapter iii., is a passage from which this doctrine of degrees in Heaven is plainly derived. The saints at Corinth had begun to be unduly partial to their religious teachers, some preferring Paul, some Apollos, some Cephas. True—so the argument goes—Paul had planted the church there, and Apollos had watered it; but “neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth: but God that giveth the increase.” Besides, they must remember that the labors of these two ministers cannot be separated, for “he that planteth and he that watereth are one”—that is, their labors have one aim, and in their effects are inseparable to the scrutiny of man. They must not, then, attempt to ascribe the honor of their conversion and faith either to the one or the other, for they cannot tell in what proportion such honor is due either to the one or the other; but let them, for the present, give all glory to God, and in due time He, to whom all hearts, and the secret of all mutual influence, are known, will adjudge the honor and the reward in their proportion, and then “every man shall receive his own reward, *according to his labor.*” Whether Paul or Apollos deserves the greatest honor, is not for them to decide, but for God; neither is it to be decided now, but must remain till the time for the reward arrives.

Farther, he tells them that he, as a wise master builder, has laid the foundation of the church at Corinth, and of their faith, "but let every man take heed how he buildeth thereon." If any one build good material, he shall receive a reward, but if he build with such material as will not stand the test, he shall suffer loss; he himself, however, "shall be saved; yet so as by fire." He is saved, but barely saved. The wood, hay, and stubble—which represent false doctrines and error in practice—with which he built shall be burnt, but still he shall not himself perish; he shall only suffer loss by it; for if he had built with pure truth, he would have been a strong full-grown saint, fit for a higher state of reward, but now he loses all his cultivation of spirit, because it was of a wrong kind, and barely enters the kingdom—enters with loss. His soul escapes at last out of its errors, but as one who escapes out of a burning house; he passes the fiery ordeal of the Judgment with nothing but his foundation, and appears as one of the least in the kingdom of Heaven. This is fairly the apostle's meaning.*

* "The materials of this spiritual building, and every man's work in it, must be 'tried as by fire,' during the discoveries of that solemn season. This will prove them 'of what sort they are;' the 'gold, silver, and precious stones' will stand the fire, and even be purified by it; and he who has built with these approved materials will receive abundant reward: but 'the wood, hay, and stubble' will be burned; and he who spent his time and labor in building with such worthless materials, will suffer great loss, in respect of the degree of his future glory; yet, provided he is indeed fixed on a good foundation, he shall finally be saved."—SCOTT.

That well-known passage in Daniel xii. 3, is strong and beautiful on this point. "And they that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever." "These words," says Bishop Lowth, "import, that they who have been the *great lights* of the world, who have instructed others by their doctrine, and confirmed them in the truth by their sufferings and example, shall have an eminently glorious reward at the day of judgment."

Look towards Heaven in a cloudless night, and see the bright azure firmament; it presents a calm and regular beauty—so shall they be who are wise unto salvation. Look again, and behold that firmament studded with stars, some mild, like the eyes of love, some bright as glory, some burning in light as if to consume themselves in their own blazing brightness—so shall those be who turn many to righteousness. Yes, it is true. The New Testament confirms the beautiful truth, by the same beautiful allusion to the varied beauty and glory of the heavens. "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead." 1 Cor. xv. 41, 42.

Think, O my soul! of that heaven of heavens! of which the starry firmament is the type. There is the star of Bethlehem, like a sun of righteousness blazing in mid-heaven, upon the crowned head of our adorable Jesus, shedding its imperial glory over all the heavenly places! There are the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, and distinguished saints of all ages,

shining like stars of the first magnitude, with imperishable brightness and beauty. There are some humble saints, on earth unknown, but known in Heaven—they had but two mites on earth as their living, but they gave it all to Christ—they were faithful over a few things, but now they are set over many; by exhibiting the beauty of holiness in a holy, though humble life, they wooed many to righteousness, and see!—they are shining with a bright though even beam, like the stars, forever and ever!

Oh! what a Heaven of light and love,
Awaits our sainted souls above!
Where all the good are blest.
All hail! our blessed Saviour's name,
Who from those heavenly mansions came,
To bring us to that rest.

I'll gladly be the faintest star,
That dawns its love-light from afar,
Into that holy place;
If but my Saviour's radiant eyes,
Smile out into those distant skies,
With light, and love, and grace.

“Is it certain then,” says Dr. Watts, “that Heaven has various degrees of happiness in it, and shall my spirit rest contented with the meanest place there, and the least and lowest measure? Hast thou no sacred ambition in thee, O my soul, to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Or dost thou not aspire at least to the middle ranks of glorified saints, though perhaps thou mayest despair of those most exalted stations which are prepared for the spirits of chief renown, for Abraham and Moses of the ancient time,

and for the martyrs and apostles of the Lamb ? Wilt thou not stir up all the vigor of nature and grace within thee, to do great service for thy God and thy Saviour on earth, that thy reward in Heaven may not be small ? Wilt thou not run with zeal and patience the race that is set before thee, looking to the brightest cloud of witnesses, and reaching at some of the richer prizes ? Remember that Jesus the Judge is coming apace ; he has rewards with him of every size, and the lustre and weight of thy crown shall most exactly correspond to thy sweat and labor."

CHAPTER VII.

*The Heavenly Place.*HARMONY OF SCRIPTURE AND ASTRONOMY.

There is a happy land,
Far, far away.

HEAVEN is a place, and not merely a state; it has locality, and is material. We will not here repeat the many considerations belonging to this point, which we have elsewhere exhibited at length.* We need only, for our present purpose, allude to this point so far as it may be necessary to enable us to reprove those false tendencies which spring from its denial.

The world of eternal blessedness and glory, called — in respect to its locality — Heaven, is alluded to in the Scriptures under a great variety of names, which designate it as a locality. It is the Heaven of Heavens. It is our Father's House. It is the Holy Place, and the Holiest Place. It is the Throne of God, to which the earth is a footstool. It is the City of God — the New Jerusalem. It is the Paradise of God — the Inheritance of the saints in light. It is the place to which Christ has gone; the place which He has prepared for His saints, and where it is His

* See the Author's "Heaven; or the Sainted Dead," chapters I. and II.

will that they shall be with Him to behold His glory, the glory which He had with His Father before the world was. It is a place “far above all heavens”—far above all principalities and powers, and above every name that is named. It is a place where God, the blessed and only Potentate, dwells in light which no man can approach unto—the glorious central presence of Him of whom the Shekinah itself is but the shade.

We might rest satisfied with a bare presentation of these familiar references to the Heavenly Place, in which the Scriptures so much abound, were it not that the pride of modern astronomical science, combined with the false spiritualism of the age, is attempting to evaporate the precious sense and substance of those allusions to a Heavenly Place, as the “mere fancies of the world’s ignorant ages”—as the mere shadowy errors of the childhood of science, which now dissolve into airy nothing before the progress of rational illumination.

While the spiritualist, in his over-refinements, exclaims, “Heaven is a state only, and not a Place,” the rationalist steps in to establish him in his faith; and, by handling the word of God deceitfully, he turns his spiritualism into skepticism. “Heaven and hell,” so exclaims the rationalist of the latest illumination,* “have vanished in the light of modern discoveries. Under the earth, where hell was supposed to lie, there live our beloved antipodes, the Americans; thus we

* Bretschneider as represented by Prof. Lange, in an article entitled *Das Land der Herligkeit*, in the *Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung* of Berlin, for the year 1837; to which also we are indebted for several other quotations in this chapter.

must seek for the under-world of the damned where the New World smiles in the light of its own joy and prosperity: unless, indeed, we should be content to find, in the deep caves of the earth, the prison of lost spirits, which, as the laboratories of nature, are ill suited to such purpose. And where Heaven was supposed to lie, above the blue canopy, we see the infinity of worlds spread out over the blue sea of æther—an infinity of which we can form no adequate conception.” Thus we will always find it to be true, that whenever spiritualism attempts to become logical and scientific it uniformly turns into skepticism, first in part, and by degrees entirely.

On the above Prof. Lange has well remarked: “According to Bretschneider’s conceptions, the deep and sacred contents of the Holy Scriptures, as they are embalmed, preserved, and presented in its religious survey of the universe, were identical with the crass and common representations which the Christian mind had conceived in this respect in earlier ages. It is known that the white glistening peaks of the mountains are no Olympic habitations of the gods, as the heathen dreamed; but this does not trouble us. It is known that Heaven is not a single extensive hall, resting upon the blue canopy which is spread over us, as simple persons and children have supposed; but yet it would be worse than senseless if we should, on this account, doubt the existence of an *external* Heaven, when we see the light of so many high and calm habitations in the wide starry extent of our Father’s House. Even though we do not, according to the popular fancies, seek the place of the lost in smoking

caves, or in deep chasms of the earth, but in the storm-swept solitudes and outer darkness of creation ; we may find such desolate places in the craters of the moon, such solitudes in Jupiter, and such outer darkness in Uranus. We would be very reluctant, with positiveness, to contend that hell is to be found in the depths of our planet-system, from the sun, away in the distant, dark, and stormy regions of those planets which revolve farthest from the sun. We do not, however, go beyond the sphere of scientific knowledge, when we point to such dark and mysterious realms, and say, "Behold, in our Father's house are many mansions, and among them are also abodes of gloomy and horrible appearance ;" and it betrays, to say the least, great ignorance to doubt, when we see such an abundance of dark planets and comets sweeping through the gloomy outskirts of space, that the existence of an outward local hell is possible. The same is true of an outward, local Heaven. Where does the Bible place the blessed, who have left the world ? In the intermediate æther ? Of this it knows nothing ; but it does know of a Heaven from which Moses and Elias descended, and to which the Saviour went in his ascension. The inward is not without the outward. There is nothing hid that shall not be revealed. The word became flesh. Even the human spirit is manifested in a bodily form. The promises of the gospel actualize themselves in the holy sacraments. The immortality of the soul has its outward completion in the resurrection of the body ; so, the inward Heaven of the blest, and the inward hell of the lost, must complete themselves by becoming manifest in an outward

Heaven and an outward hell. Hence the Homes of the Blest, who shine as the sun, must be illumined habitations—bright and radiant worlds on high."

Faith has nothing to fear, but every thing to hope, from the advances of science. The wise men will ever lay their treasures at the feet of Jesus. Hence faith, when it is intelligent, never stands in jealous opposition to science, but "longs to harmonize every thing with itself, and to pervade it with its spirit. It desires to make every thing religiously transparent and holy, and thus to change all knowledge into theology."

Those grand glances, which modern astronomy has cast into the hitherto unfathomed deeps of the heavenly regions, have not only done much to show how science does ever confirm the Scriptures in its allusions to a blessed heavenly world, but they also vastly aid in elevating our conceptions of its indescribable grandeur and glory. Herschel, who penetrated the heavenly space to a greater distance than had ever before been done, saw how, beyond the reach of the largest telescopes, other and still other star-clusters and systems dawned to view! showing that astronomical science has not yet demonstrated that there is no Imperial Capitol of the universe, where the KING OF KINGS resides in such glory as belongs not to any of the outer suburbs of the royal city—the eternal Salem of rest and peace!

This eminent astronomer has also recorded some sublime facts—phenomena richly suggestive of ideas, from which inferences may be drawn that belong to our subject. Among other things, he discovered regions in the heavens, that are far more densely

crowded with worlds than is the space nearer to us. He observed, in general, that, while the region of the heavens in which our solar system moves, is characterized by comparative emptiness, the more distant regions of the heavens are closely studded with nebula, stars, and star-clusters. For instance, he saw that a space only as large as that circumscribed by a circle of the extent of our solar system, has about 50,000 bright worlds circling in it! How wonderfully compact! What a friendly nearness of innumerable bright worlds!

"Let us penetrate into the midst of one of these clusters of stars, and, with it, make a small excursion through the heavens. We accordingly elevate ourselves above the sandbank of stars to which our sun belongs, which lies in irregular form before us as the Milky-Way. We turn towards a distant point or pole of it, around which seem to lie innumerable clusters of stars; we pass by the bright star Arcturus; our Milky-Way now appears less and less, its stars compress themselves still closer, and grow more dim, while the nearest fixed star grows brighter and brighter. We ascend the first star of the cluster. Before us, towards its middle, glow hundreds of stars, which far exceed in brightness the stars of the first magnitude, which we see in our own solar system. We traverse still brighter regions, till finally we have reached its middle point, where we find ourselves in AN ETERNAL SUNSHINE! Nowhere is there a dark Heaven. All is light; no shade, day or night. It is as if the light existed here for itself, and rejoiced in itself. Here, in these high regions of light, our bodily eyes see nothing any more; for what we

see now, in this world, is merely the conflict between darkness and light; but there, there is no time and no eternity, according to our present mode of thinking; for here day and night, and the movements of light in the dark heavens, make our time.”*

Here astronomy, even under its present limitations, demonstrates the existence of facts which confirm the declaration of Scripture, when it says of the bright world on high, “There shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun!” We do not mean to express the opinion that Heaven is located in any such bright cluster of friendly stars, nor even that these are some of the “many mansions in our Father’s house,” but we may certainly refer to them as stepping-stones to our conceptions, which shall aid us in rising to that grand and lofty idea of our future Home, to which the Scriptures so often allude.

Herschel speaks also of discoveries in reference to the movements of what he calls the “flying star in the Swan;” which open to our view grand conceptions of what is, and of what may be, in the heavenly regions. “This star of the sixth magnitude in the Milky-Way, moving towards the constellation Orion, of the distance of which we know nothing, of which, however, we can say, that if the rate of his movement continues the same, he will, in about 50,000 years, arrive at that place in the heavens where the constellation Orion is — this star has a very small dark star with it, which accompanies it on this great journey, which also at the same time revolves around it like a satellite; this jour-

* Dr. W. Pfaff, in his work, “Der Mensch und die Sterne,” quoted by Lange.

ney, too, the star makes free and undisturbed among the countless stars of the Milky-Way; he the fastest among them all, the fastest in the whole heaven. Shall we now ascend to the Milky-Way, and search for the sun around which this star moves, while the small star moves around him like a satellite? Giddiness will seize us if we have no firmer hold than the conceptions which we get from the circle of our own world of planets and constellations; we will fall from those brilliant heights back upon our clod of earth, unconscious of ourselves, and thus pay the penalty for venturing upon so grand and mighty a problem." What world of light blazes in the centre of that system to which this star belongs, perhaps eternity will reveal! Neither do the discoveries of astronomy forbid, but much rather encourage us to regard this star, in its grand sweep, in comparison, as but a moon to a sun, which itself moves around another grand centre, increasing in brightness and glory as it does in distance and extent! Thus the grandest flights of poetry become but sober history.

No twilight of earth,
May draw near this bright Heaven's extinguishing blaze!
Distant, and flying still farther away, are nature's dull
Cloud-covered realms. Small, insignificant earths,
Unnoticed almost, are hastening still back, as dust—
The abode of vile worms—falls away from the traveller's feet!
Around this vast Heaven are thousands of avenues bright—
Paths, glorious and long, in endless perspective drawn out,
And hung round with suns. And, Oh! the bright middle is
Heaven—
Round, immense, the IDEAL of Worlds—Perfection's most
perfect
And beautiful work!

KLOPSTOCK'S MESSIAH.

It is mentioned in the above extract that the flying star in the Swan passes free and undisturbed through the densest regions of the starry heavens, and owns no attractive or repulsive affinities with any of the countless systems through which its pathway lies. Other discoveries prove that this phenomenon is not uncommon in the distant heavens. "These stars, accompanied with stars as constellations, must be viewed as *free comets*. For the reason that they have selected for themselves a sun as their companion, they are subject to no other sun, but are connected with this as a planet. Let us now consider closely what it is and implies, a sun to be satellite to a sun, both of equal dignity, and there are many examples in the heavens where both are alike in every respect, even in color, lustre, and size. We do not know what is the nature of that law which points out to them their course through the heavens, but we are disposed to think that it is a higher one than that which reigns in the regions near us. These stars, it is true, are not free from corporeality, but they are nevertheless exalted above that insatiableness which matter manifests in the lower regions, to draw all other bodies to itself, and to unite itself with them; they expend their power mutually upon each other, and the disturbing forces of attraction towards other bodies is suspended, or does not exist. Since, as Herschel says, such friendly suns may move around each other in wide-extended paths, instead of circles, we may at some period behold the spectacle of such a sun descending into the regions of our solar system, not as an enemy, by its insatiableness to draw matter to itself, and thus throw our system

into disorder, but in a friendly way, satisfied already in itself, only as a brilliant thought from on high!" Why may it not come on some high mission of love and good to our earth, and to our race? He that maketh clouds His chariots, may He not also so use the stars? "I John saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." In what a grand sense, in that case, might "the church that waiteth for Him" throw her glad hands on high, and exclaim, "The chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof!"

"Thus we have the manifestation of a NEW law in the heavenly regions. Not every orb feels for another, and desires, as we say, to unite with it. There is no more any reason to fear that the universe will one day fall together into a shapeless lump. Free from all external disturbance, innumerable suns, star-clusters, and swarms of stars have associated themselves in rest, and in eternal sunshine. Thus what is like-minded is drawn together to the formation of a kingdom, and has no affinity for that which is foreign or strange. The Comet feels the power of his sun, of his associated planets, but quietly he wanders from his sphere out into the regions of other mighty stars, and, after centuries, returns again unhurt and unhindered, in an independent path." According to these discoveries, the same laws of relation and inter-dependence, which we know here as attraction and gravitation, do not reign universally in the heavens. "Yes, I would almost contend, that the essence or consistence of these most beautiful members of the heavenly regions, and of those star-clusters, is far simpler and more refined, and

therefore capable of a far more delicate and gentle handling by attractive and repulsive forces, than are those in which attraction and gravitation reigns. Let any one just imagine to himself innumerable such stars united in one globe, holding themselves in balance by a higher principle of freedom and dependence than we know of amid the rough friction and violence of our present sphere. All is controlled by a softened, elastic swinging to and fro of these shining natures. There is an union in joyful rest; where each member feels the living pulse and breathing of all the others. Into such worlds we gladly, with the Greeks, translate the spirits of the departed."

In those happy regions of love, the social feelings of the inhabitants are externalized, so that the planets themselves are glorified in love. "There, star moves in sisterly harmony with star. Hosts of bright worlds are enfolded in a higher bond of fellowship than that which binds together stones and clods upon the earth. Between these harmonious choruses of stars, the light never fades away. There, in those star-clusters on high, the united beams of a thousand suns make one eternal day. This can be a home for such inhabitants only, whose more spiritual natures have no more need of the alternations of day and night, of light and darkness, of heat and cold, and among whom sleep and death are known no more."*

Have we then found the Heavenly Place? This we say not; but we have found, not only that the existence of an outward Heavenly Place is possible, but also that the deepest investigations of science make it

* Schubert.

quite probable ; and render it entirely unnecessary for us to evaporate into mythological mist-images the bright Heaven of the Bible, with the view of harmonizing the discoveries of astronomy and the teachings of faith. The Holiest Place—the Salem of peace and rest, we have not seen ; but we have seen golden festal lamps hung out on high—our eyes have traced bright avenues stretching in long perspective towards a place which eye hath not seen—we have discovered bright points, as it were minarets, of a celestial city, blaze high up in the realms of eternal sunshine—we have heard harmonies as if from happy worshipping worlds afar—and the aspirations of our longing hearts have gazed earnestly and hopefully into regions of changeless, pure, peaceful, and everlasting rest. If this is not the home of our sainted friends, we are still not sad ; for we know that then it is one brighter, holier, lovelier, and better still. Yet “tell not the pilgrim, who is journeying through the dark night, that those tents afar, from which such a friendly light shines invitingly towards him, are empty, tenantless, and cold !”

Who ever looked upon yon starry spheres,
Which brightly shine from out the dark blue sky,
Nor called to mind the friends of other years,
The hopes, the joys, the transient smiles and tears,
Gushing from out where buried memories lie,
And waking the full heart to highest ecstasy !

Oh ! who has ever gazed on such a scene,
Nor thought the spirits of the blest were there ?
Who, that beholds not in that blue serene,
Bright isles, the abodes of pleasures yet unseen,
Except by those who, freed from mortal care,
Have winged their raptured flight to realms of upper air ?

The Mother, who has watched with sleepless eye
 Her babe, and rocked with tireless foot the while,
And when she saw the little sufferer die,
Bowed her meek head and wept in silent agony,
 Fancies she hears, in yonder starry isle,
 Her little cherub's voice, and sees his angel smile.

Prof. Lange, from whose article, entitled "Das Land der Herrlichkeit," we have taken the foregoing quotations from Herschel, Pfaff, and Schubert, but whose excellent comments we have for the most part omitted, as not suited directly to our purpose—concludes that part of his article with thoughts so just, convincing, and beautiful, and so well suited to the subject before us, that we cannot resist the temptation of quoting them without any omissions. With words from him we will conclude this chapter.

"An astronomical survey of the heavens which opens up new and elevating vista into a bright City of God, presenting it to the view of unprejudiced science as the true Salem of quietude, of light, of rest, and of joy, has now been exhibited in the words of several respectable masters of astronomical science. We now turn away from those discoveries which the human eye, aided by science and the telescope, is able to make in the realm of the heavens, and attend to those discoveries which are possible to men aided by faith and the illumination of the divine Spirit. We will endeavor to exhibit, according to the teachings of Scripture, the outlines of Christ's kingdom, the realms of the blest, the land of heavenly felicity.

"The words of the Saviour, 'I go to the Father,' John xvi. 17, will serve as the foundation of our first

observation. It is evident that the Saviour did not intend that this declaration should be taken in a purely spiritual sense. For, when He spake of his spiritual relation to the Father, he could say: ‘He that seeth me seeth the Father; and the Father is in me and I in Him.’ According to his human nature also, He was in the bosom of the Father, and was already on earth with the Father; for He lived and had His being in the inmost feeling, and in the clearest and deepest consciousness of the divine Omnipresence. And yet He says: ‘I go to the Father.’ Thus, then, in that sense in which He wishes us to understand Him, He was not yet with the Father. He here presents to us the same thought as when He teaches us, in the Prayer, to say: ‘Our Father which art in Heaven.’ The passage directs our thoughts to a **HEAVENLY PLACE**, where the Throne of God’s glory is, and where the divine excellence is exhibited in its highest fulness. The declaration, then, of the Saviour, ‘I go to the Father,’ points to His ascension into Heaven. His ascension is, therefore, in the truest sense, a going away from the earth; but not in the pantheistic sense, an evaporation and dispersion of His personality in the clouds of Heaven, or an absorption of it into the essence of Deity. His was a definite, visible, and tangible departure from mortal shores, and a positive, visible, and tangible landing on the shores of the eternal world. There, where Christ landed, after His triumphant ascension through the blue sea of æther, the Father is in the most eminent sense, and there is the lofty throne of the universe. This heavenly region we are to regard, according to the Scriptures,

as the place where Divine excellence is unfolded in its glory.

“The idea of the existence of such a high and central throne in the universe, such an illuminated summit in the creation of God, must at once commend itself to thoughtful minds, in the full power of its glorious truth. God manifests Himself every where in His works; but His works ever present themselves to us in a regular and discernible upward gradation. Every where there are degrees in creation; there are, as it were, winding steps in every department of life, which tend ever upwards, and point us to a grand summit, an eternal Mount Zion. In the stone formations of earth we behold already the image of a divine thought reflecting its light upon us. The same thought is imaged forth in a way still more intelligent, more tender, and more lovely, in the rose. More wonderful and moving still in the tones of the nightingale’s song; but most glorious and spiritual of all, in the human eye. Thus from the stone to man there is a gradual ascent of many steps; but from the smallest, or even from the most excellent of men, up to Him who is the fairest among the children of men—in whom dwells the fulness of the Godhead—what a path from an abyss up to a blessed height! Christ Himself, in His human nature, had an ascent to make; this is seen in His transfiguration upon the mount, which at first only broke forth as an adumbration from his servant-form, but which was afterwards to manifest itself in completeness in His ascension to Heaven—thus does a beautiful thought first dawn in the soul in the form of a lovely feeling, and afterwards gradually grow to

perfection. So it is in reference to whole regions. Not over the whole earth is dispersed the same life, light, and beauty. There are solitudes in the earth which none can or will inhabit. There are barren and dreary regions which men assign to evil spirits as their habitations. There are, moreover, rough regions only beloved by a few whose ‘sweet homes’ are there, or by Poets to whom the hidden beauties of the world are known, and who look upon the dark wastes of earth as suitable shades in the background of that wonderful picture which they construct out of the world as a whole. Then appear also the lovely and the lovelier regions of the earth; and from among them, the eye that has the keenest perception of the beautiful, selects yet the loveliest—those in which the richest fulness of thought, of love, of life, and of harmony are exhibited. But now, the same train of reflections will lead our thoughts upward through the realms of heavenly space. Thus there must be—this mode of thinking leads us to conclude—above all these fields of light a grand and glorious throne-summit, where the Divine glory is unfolded in its highest conception; where we shall be enabled, in the most perfect manner, to view the works and the ways of God’s wisdom, omnipotence, love, all-sufficiency, and omnipresence; and where His unseen essence shines forth from the most transparent and glorified forms and organizations of creative power.

“This conclusion, to which we are led by following these Zion-like ascents which are manifest in the world around us, receives also confirmation from the Holy Scriptures. The whole Sacred Scriptures teach us to worship God as dwelling in the heavens, even though

it teaches His omnipresence, by which he dwells also on the earth. It tells us that the Lord's throne is in the heavens; and that the earth is His footstool. The Prophet Isaiah saw God in a vision: He sat upon a throne, high and lifted up; His train filled the temple, and the Seraphim covered their faces before Him with their wings. In this way does the prophet distinguish this high and holy place, where God appears as the highest King, from the temple, which is only filled with his train—the outer edges and folds of His royal robe. In His immediate presence, moreover, the blaze of His Divine Majesty is so transcendent, that the highest spirits give evidence of its presence, in that they veil their faces, as a token that even they are not able to endure the sight of such excellent glory with open face! Hence also says St. Paul: ‘God dwells in light which no man can approach unto: whom no man hath seen nor can see!’ This expression, however, he qualifies and completes, when he says: “Now we see through a glass, darkly; then face to face; now I know in part; but then I shall know even as also I am known.” Here we gain our knowledge by mere transient flashes, as the spiritual is reflected upon us from the cloudy mirror of the coarse material world; we learn by signs and symbols; but then we shall have direct and immediate visions of blessedness, a view of God in His highest revelations, such as the Saviour refers to when He says: ‘Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.’

“This place is the HOLY OF HOLIES. There is a holy of holies of the Divine presence in the great temple of the universe, in the depths of the heavens.

This idea is also suggested by a devout contemplation of the manifold revelations of God in nature. There are manifestations which intoxicate the senses by the richness of their beauty; but there are also such as cause the heart to tremble with bliss, by the power of their spiritual loveliness. There are manifestations in which the beautiful and the sublime are united; and also those in which this sublime-beautiful becomes transparent before the deep, holy, and earnest contemplation of the Spirit. Whoever beholds a beautifully colored bird, will feel a sensible pleasure; whoever understands the song of the nightingale will be stirred in his inmost soul; whoever hears the turtle-dove complain, will find himself moved still more deeply and earnestly in his heart, and will feel that a spirit of earnest and almost doleful sympathy has taken possession of his soul. In the rolling of the thunder, the enjoyment of the beautiful by the *senses* retires, and is not at all perceptible, while the sensitive soul is seized upon by a kind of holy shudder. When the beautiful in the world manifests itself alone, so that the friendly features of God's character are exclusively seen, profane souls remain profanely inclined; yea, they become even more profligate in the misuse of the riches of God's goodness. If, on the other hand, the greatness and power of God are revealed in the rugged and terribly sublime, in the hurricane, in the ocean-storm, then the profane are overwhelmed with horror, which is easily changed into fear, and may manifest itself in hypocritical or superficial exhibitions of penitence; but when the goodness and power of God manifest themselves in one and the same bright phenome-

non, this produces a frame of spirit which speaks of that which is holy. This is the reason why the much-praised valley of the Rhine is so solemn and Sabbathic; because it is enamelled by a blending of the beautiful and the sublime; stern mountains, rugged rocks, ruins of the past, vestiges of grandeur, monumental columns of God's power, and these columns at the same time garlanded with the loving wreaths of God's favor and goodness, in the midst of smiling vineyards that repose sweetly around, in the mild sunlight of Heaven. For this reason the starry night is so instructive—the grandest dome decked with the brightest radiance of kindness and love. For the same reason there is such magic attraction in the morning dawn and in the evening twilight: they take hold upon us like movings to prayer; because, in them, beauty is so mingled with holy rest, with spiritual mystery, with the earnest and sublime. Thus does it meet the festive children of this world, who are generally of a prayerless spirit, so that they are, as it were, prostrated upon the earth in deep devotion, when some great sight in nature, in which the beautiful is clothed with sublime earnestness, bursts upon their view; or when, on the other hand, some marked manifestation of God's power is associated with heart-moving wooings of kindness. Accordingly, we hear one tell what pious emotions he felt stirring his bosom when he beheld the wide-extended country from the top of the Pyrenees; another tells how the spirit of prayer seized upon his soul when he stood upon the heights of Caucasus, and felt, as he looked over the eastern fields and valleys of Asia, as if Heaven had opened itself before him. Such witnesses

might be gathered to almost any extent. But now it is certain that there must be SOME PLACE, in the upper worlds, where the beauties and wonders of God's works are illuminated to the highest transparency by His power and holy majesty; where the combination of lovely manifestations, as seen from radiant summits, the enraptured gaze into the quiet valleys of universal creation, and the streams of light which flow through them, must move the spirits of the blest in the mightiest manner, to cry out, Holy! Holy! Holy!— And there is the holiest place in the great Temple! It is there, because there divine manifestations fill all spirits with a feeling of His holiness. But still rather, because there He reveals Himself through holy spirits, and through the holiest One of all, even Jesus Himself!

“To such ascents by gradation we are also pointed by the typical construction of the Jewish Temple, which, with its outer court, its Holy Place, and its Holy of Holies, was no doubt a shadowing forth of things in the heavens—of the vast Temple of the universe. Hence also it is said in the epistle to the Hebrews: ‘For Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands, which are the figures of the true: but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.’

“This holiest of all is, accordingly, the PLACE WHERE CHRIST IS—THE PLACE OF HIS EXALTATION. Inasmuch as He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, therefore God hath highly exalted Him, and has given Him a name which is above every name. On account of

his infinite faithfulness, his human nature was also exalted to the highest dignity in his Father's house; and with him the believing portion of the human race is translated into the heavenly existence. No angel, as He did, saved a fallen world; none like Him withstood and overcame temptations from the combined power of dark and rebellious Spirits; none like Him bore on his faithful heart, to the uttermost, the burden and curse of a lost world, and endured the fearful feeling of being forsaken of God; and none like Him spread over the realms of earth, the blessings and mercies of a heavenly Father's heart, and by His Spirit changed lost sinners into children of light, numerous as the dew of the morning. Hence He is the great hero of heavenly virtues, the chief among the Spirits of Heaven, the first-born, who excels all the rest in merit, righteousness, and honor. The Epistle to the Hebrews abounds in expressions of astonishment in view of this divine-human excellence in Christ, which He won through His great sufferings, and the atonement which He made by them. To none of the angels, we are told, said God at any time, 'Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool,' but to the Son. It has been fashionable, of late, to consider the often repeated doctrine of the New Testament concerning Christ's sitting at the right hand of God, as entirely figurative; as though we were merely to understand by it that He has been exalted to the highest honor and authority with God, in order to reign in His name. But it has been forgotten by those who interpret this language in this way, that He who has reached that

place of divine exaltation, must also, in His essence, and in that which surrounds Him, be eternalized : that these throne-relations must also have an outward manifestation and locality. Let it be true of God that we cannot say of Him in a proper sense, that He has a right hand, still we cannot consider in the same way the words, Throne of Christ, as entirely a figure, to be interpreted satisfactorily by a purely spiritual signification. However much a spiritual sense may predominate, there remains still a local basis, and we are forced to believe that Christ, in His personal substance, is there where God manifests, in the most exalted manner, His honor and power, or figuratively, at His right hand.

"The Apostle James refers to this high throne, where God and Heaven are, in these words: 'Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from *the Father of lights*, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning ;' that is, no shades of night produced by the turning away from each other of the earth and the sun. Here too, even granting that the spiritual sense predominates, there is evidently the basis of a local world of light remaining; yes, it points plainly to that region from which, as from a fountain, flow all light, all power, and all blessings, to the whole creation. There, where the golden stream of life has its holy and mysterious fountain in the Holiest Place, there is Christ, the image of the Father, the brightness of his glory; and there will prove true, in their full accomplishment, His words, 'He that seeth me seeth the Father.' It is because He is there, whence all blessings proceed, that He is

also every where so inexpressibly near to His own children. Hence also, all angelic hosts, and all existing kingdoms of spirits that dwell elsewhere in creation, are subject to His dominion. As He, in His personality, exceeds all spirits, so also does He in the kingdom of His glory. This is taught by the Apostle Paul, in both those mysterious passages which we have already quoted. In the Epistle to the Ephesians, Chapter i. 19, 20, it is said that God ‘raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.’ Similar to this is his language to the Colossians, i. 16: ‘For by him were all things created, that are in Heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him.’ The chief difference between the two passages is this, that the dominion of Christ is represented, in Ephesians, as being over every name, in so far as He had won it as man by His righteousness; but in Colossians we are told how He, in virtue of His dignity, had the same already from the beginning of the world. While now, we desire to avoid, on the one hand, the sense given to these passages by the Rabbinical or mystical writers, with their copious details and curious precision concerning the doctrine of angels, we must not, on the other hand, suffer them to vanish into the ideal, or narrow them down arbitrarily, as if they spake merely of the powers of this world, and of orders of spirits on the earth. For clearly, they have reference

also to the powers of the other world, and to that which is in the heavens. This much is sure, that in these passages the different degrees, orders, and departments of the Kingdom of Spirits are designated. Higher, however, than all these, and over them, is Christ's Kingdom of blessedness ; and thither His own people will be exalted to enjoy it with Him. Christians are heirs of God, and joint heirs of Christ. They shine brighter in the righteousness of Christ than the angels do in their innocence. For they have come up through much tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. What is said of Magdalene is also true of all Christians : ‘They love much because much has been forgiven them ;’ and for this reason also do they shine so brightly in the light of grace. They are crowned through grace ; the revelation of God’s grace has sealed them and impressed them with its image. They are those who, having been peculiarly preserved, have remained faithful, and thus have received from God the crown of everlasting life. Of His own will begat He them, according to James, by the word of truth, that they should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures. As kings and priests they stand on high — as priests, that are free from all, and can therefore offer all to God continually — as kings, who with Him possess and rule all.

“ Thus also, finally, this place where Christ is, is the HEAVENLY ZION. Never was there a more lovely longing, a nobler reverence, a more pious animation given to man, than that with which the pious Israelites looked toward Mount Zion in the good old days of its

glory, when yet the citadel of David crowned its top. But then already was it to the believing Jew a figure of the Heavenly Kingdom of God and His Anointed ; it was to him rather a heavenly symbol, than a heavenly manifestation. To him, the true royal citadel lay on high. Later, this mountain of God became, in the plainest manner, symbolical ; hence it is said of it, that in the last days the mountain of the Lord's house shall be higher than all hills. In the times of the Apostles, however, when the earthly Jerusalem continued in impenitency, and its inhabitants became the murderers of Christ, and after He had ascended to Heaven to enter upon his eternal throne, then the thoughts of Christians, being strongly directed towards the heavenly Zion, withdrew themselves entirely from the typical representation of it in the earthly Zion, and then the earthly Jerusalem lost its sacredness in their minds, and was rather regarded as part of the great profane Babel of earth.

"Shall we still look upon it as shadowing forth and pointing out to us the Heavenly Zion ? Is not this a mere play of mystic Christians ? Does not this remind us of the time of Zion's watchmen ? Yes, it is a play ; but a higher truth is to be sought in this constant use which the children of God made of this heavenly Zion. It reminds us certainly of the time when men still thought of the eternal city of God as a certain place of blessedness, and had a desire to depart from earth to enter that bright and beautiful city, the heavenly Jerusalem, where the Patriarchs and Apostles dwell, and where Christ's throne stands. This feeling of confident expectation which at that time

reigned in the hearts of men was a true feeling; their hopes were scriptural and reasonable. This heavenly city, where Christ's throne is, is called Zion, because there all the expectations which the Old Testament saints connected with the earthly Zion, will be fulfilled, and because also there every thing which the Jews associated with the shadowy picture of the earthly Zion, is forever perfected in a glorious actualization. Thus, there reigns the true son of David, the peaceful prince, (Solomon) on an everlasting throne. From thence God's gracious Kingdom, in all directions, is supplied, preserved, sanctified, and built up by blessings and gifts. For this reason that place is called, in the Epistle to the Galatians, Jerusalem which is above and free, the mother of all His believing children, the true and eternal metropolis of Christendom. There Jesus assembles His own around Him—the spirits of the just made perfect. It is the Fatherland of all His holy citizens. From thence also He will come, accompanied with holy angels, in the revelation of His judicial and kingly glory to judge the quick and the dead. That is, therefore, truly the royal City and Palace, constructed in the most perfect form, and of the rarest materials which the upper world of light can furnish. This Zion-like nature of the highest Heaven is referred to in the Epistle to the Hebrews, when he says to Christians: 'Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and

to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.'

Thus much we have thought it necessary to offer by way of gentle correction and reproof to the rationalistic and spiritualistic skepticism of the age, in reference to the Heavenly Place. It belongs more directly to our present purpose to speak of this place in its relations to the happiness of the saints. To this we devote the following Chapter. The seeming digression which the present Chapter has occasioned, will be readily pardoned, upon the ground that a foundation is of equal importance with the building itself; or rather, the falling away of the false must ever precede the appearance of the true.

THE BETTER LAND.

I hear thee speak of the better Land,
Thou call'st its children a happy band.
Mother, oh ! where is that radiant shore ?
Shall we not seek it and weep no more ?
Is it where the flower of the orange blows,
And the fire-flies glance through the myrtle boughs ?
—Not there, not there, my child !

Is it where the feathery palm-trees rise,
And the date grows ripe under sunny skies ?
Or midst the green islands of glittering seas,
Where fragrant forests perfume the breeze,
And strange, bright birds, on their starry wings,
Bear the rich hues of all glorious things ?
—Not there, not there, my child !

Is it far away, in some region old,
Where the rivers wander o'er sands of gold ?

Where the burning rays of the ruby shine,
And the diamond lights up the secret mine,
And the pearl gleams forth from the coral strand—
Is it there, sweet Mother, that better Land?
—Not there, not there, my child!

Eye hath not seen it, my gentle boy!
Ear hath not heard its deep songs of joy;
Dreams cannot picture a world so fair—
Sorrow and death do not enter there;
Time doth not breathe on its fadeless bloom,
Far beyond the clouds, and beyond the tomb,
—It is there, it is there, my child!

MRS. HEMANS.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Heavenly Place

IN ITS RELATION TO THE BLISS OF THE SAINTS.

Come with us, and behold far higher sight
Than e'er thy heart desired, or hope conceived.
See, yonder is the glorious hill of God,
'bove angel's gaze in brightness rising high,
Come, join our wing, and we will guide the flight,
To mysteries of everlasting bliss,
The tree, and fount of bliss, the eternal throne,
And presence-chamber of the King of Kings.

POLLOCK.

TAKING now the general conclusion which we reached in the preceding Chapter—that the future abode of the saints is a local and material world—as our premises, we are prepared to extend our inquiry into greater detail. In doing so, we shall be careful to proceed in the sure and steady light of divine revelation. While we shall seek to avoid the error of those who go *beyond* what is written, we shall also keep in mind the error of those who stay *behind* what is written. The first is the error of the fanciful, the second of the idle. Both are equally evils, and both are to be avoided with equal care.

We are on firm ground when we start out with the principle, that if the Heavenly Place is a material world, then matter there must exist in an *organized form*. This commends itself to every reflective mind as self-evident. Or must we think of the beautiful land of the blest as a vast region of chaos, and of shapeless, lifeless solitude! Such regions have, by the sense of all ages, been appropriated as the abodes of evil, gloomy, outcast spirits.

There is, furthermore, nothing either in reason, science, or Scripture, to forbid us considering the material organizations which beautify the Celestial Place, as not abruptly dissimilar from those which are familiar to us in this world.

What if earth

Be but the shadow of Heaven and things therein,
Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?

“Many,” says Trench, “are the sayings of a like kind among the Jewish Cabalists. Thus in the book Sohar: ‘Whatever is in the earth is also in Heaven; and nothing is so small in the world that it does not correspond to a similar thing in Heaven.’” We love to think of a world in which all that is blemished and imperfect here shall appear in beauteous perfection. As our bodily organization, which is evidently the master-piece of earthly organisms, is to be transferred and glorified, why may we not also hope to find the ‘whole creation which waiteth for the adoption,’ in renovated, glorified forms on high? Nature here struggles after glorifying itself, but ever falls back again upon the bosom of earth, having failed to reach a

permanent perfection. It accords best with our ideas of a God who delights in perfection, as well as with the deep sympathies of our nature, to believe that, in the heavenly world, the whole order of nature beneath man, and, like him, imperfect in the present state, will be represented in another state by that perfect ideal which it here struggles after, but never attains. Will not the beautiful become, not only perfect, but also permanent?

In this life our spirits are connected, through the body, with the outward world, and become habituated to it. The outward world is the substratum on which one side of our being rests; the spirit is moulded, to a great extent, by it; and its silent suggestions through the senses in a degree impress and rule the emotions and habits of the soul. Thus the scenes which lie around us are, in a deep sense, part of our being. An important part of our spiritual nature, namely, our imaginative sentiments, living as they do between the purely intellectual and the physical, are almost entirely developed under the influence of earthly scenery, and are therefore livingly associated with its forms of organization. That we shall leave these behind in the transition of death, would be the same as to say that we should leave our memory, or any other faculty behind—which would be to destroy our personal identity. Our imagination, which needs scenery for its health and development, is not a profane faculty, but will share in the sanctification and glorification of the new man, and be made to contribute to the ecstacies of bliss. “The imaginative sentiments,” says Taylor in his *Physical Theory* of another life, “might, perhaps, at

first view, be regarded as being of temporary use only, inasmuch as they constitute a reconciling medium between the animal and intellectual principles. But, in considering them further, it appears that they go beyond this lower office, and, in fact, mingle themselves with the very highest and purest moral feelings. We ought then to reckon them among the nobler and permanent elements of our nature, and must therefore assume that they will belong to the spiritual, as they have belonged to the animal body."

We cannot, however, think of a violent transition of our imaginative nature into a world of entirely different forms from those among which the imagination has all along lived and received its cultivation. There would, in such ease, be pain instead of joy; and there would manifest itself in the spirit a feeling of home-sickness similar to that which is felt by the Swiss, when they look in vain, in a foreign land, for the eternal Alps which have been part of themselves from childhood. The imagination, thus bound to scenery of a certain type, must have a world of congeniality in which to try its powers, and still farther to expand them in the direction of its previous growth. To suppose any thing different from this, would be to make our entrance into the future world, rather a going into a foreign land, than a going home.

What scenes of beauty is this wonderful faculty able to combine, even in its present imperfection, and out of the materials furnished in this sin-disordered world! It must, however, in Heaven, have a field, where it can form infinitely more transcendant combinations of beauty; and thus, while such scenes will

contribute to the bliss of the Saints, they will also enable them still to increase their capacities for happiness, by affording occasion for the cultivation of this, as of all other powers, to their highest perfection. The very fact that the imagination — which cannot create but only combine — is able to form to itself a world of beauty similar to this, but infinitely transcending it in beauty and glory, may reasonably be taken as a sure prophecy that such a world awaits the spirit's advanced condition. To think the contrary, would be to suppose, that a created faculty can itself create, instead of merely comprehending what is created.

That scenery, such as is similar to that around us now, can constitute a fit abode for holy beings, is proved from the fact that our first parents dwelt amid such scenes before they lost their innocence by their dreadful fall. That such scenery is not averse to holy dispositions is also evident from the fact that, even in this life, the more the heart is refined by grace, the more does it delight in beautiful scenery. While stupid sinners walk amid the beauties of nature "with brute unconscious gaze," the heart softened and refined by grace feels in every nerve the mysterious tremor of bliss. It is the gracious heart of the Christian alone that can feel and enjoy the beautiful in the world around. The carnal worldling may hold the title in law, of silent woods, quiet meadows, sloping highlands, and extended plains, but the Christian really owns and enjoys them. Though he can show title to not a foot of earth, yet

He looks abroad into the varied field
Of nature, and though poor, perhaps, compared
With those whose mansions glitter in his sight,
Calls the delightful scenery all his own.
His are the mountains, and the valleys his,
And the resplendent rivers.

Are they not his
Whose eyes they fill with holy joy,
Whose heart with praise ?

This love of natural scenery, which increases with the growth of grace, proves that it is not profane, or foreign to holiness ; but that such animated nature as earth presents accords most sweetly with every advance of our being through grace toward glorification.

We find, moreover, that such scenery is not only congenial, but has also a moral effect upon man. The sublime elevates him ; the beautiful refines him. What Shakspeare says of him “who hath no music in his soul,” we may safely say of him to whom flowers, and all the beauties of light and shade, are not exhortations to mildness, tenderness, and love. The whole world of nature is a vast parable, which stands for the moral instruction of all rational orders, the end of whose meaning the mightiest has not yet reached. Nature, in its milder forms, allures us, and in its rougher forms reproves us. He who sins in the midst of scenes of beauty and grandeur, is in the awful state of those Galilean sinners, whose daring impiety in the midst of the holy place of the temple was punished by a mingling of their own blood with that of their sacrifices. Such is the legitimate moral influence of lovely scenery, that he who can be wicked in the midst of it,

scarce dares seek repentance! It is to such that the poet makes this soul-stirring appeal:

O how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields!
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even,
And all the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of Heaven,
O how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiven!

If beautiful scenery even in this world contributes so much towards our refinement and moral perfection, why should it, when it exists in its most perfect forms, be regarded as uncongenial to the heart, or profane in its influence? As on earth—so we believe—that place is home to the *man*, where he meets again the scenes which laid their eternal impress upon his heart when a *child*, and which have become most tenderly holy to him after years of wandering and of wo, so a prominent element of the home feeling in our Father's house above, will return with the beautiful and permanent perfection of that which the devout heart loved on earth—and loved for the very reason that its struggles to represent the perfect pointed him to a higher world, and waked in his heart longings for the infinite, where that which is in part shall be taken up into that which is perfect.

In beautiful harmony with these remarks, are the familiar references of the Scriptures to the heavenly world. Gems, precious stones, trees, flowers, and fruits, fountains, streams, and rivers, are of frequent

recurrence in the pictures of the future life. Figurative—spiritual! exclaims the sublimated spiritualist. Very true. But have figures no substance? and have spirits no bodies? It is extremely doubtful whether those who exclaim “spiritual” at the mention of such passages, have ever paused sufficiently long, and thought with sufficient earnestness on them, to penetrate their sense and substance. Do we mean, by figurative, merely that there shall be some attribute in the spirits of the saints which corresponds to these; then what will we make of the absurdity involved in eating those fruits, and drinking from that stream of life! Plainly, these figures are designed to represent some of the *externals* of Heaven. They are designed to set forth what that happy world will be, not *in* the saints, but *to* them. Let any one carry out the purely spiritual ideas of Heaven consistently, and follow up the conception into all its consequences, denying that objective organized forms of animated nature exist in Heaven, and seek to fortify that position with arguments, and the absurdity of the imagination will at once appear. The result will be a showing that Heaven is either a chaotic, or a fantastic place.

If we grant that organizations of animated nature, similar to the scenery of earth, exist in Heaven, it is equally plain that these must appear in vastly more refined forms.

We discover in this world a marked difference in organized forms, not only in the substance of their materiality, but also in the delicacy and beauty of their organization. These degrees of relative perfection characterize all the kingdoms of nature, inanimate

and animate, mineral, vegetable, animal, intellectual, and moral. Crystals, gems, ores; trees, plants, flowers; animals, birds, insects, and fishes, are found on earth in every stage of beauty and perfection; while in the higher world of rational beings there is also every physical, intellectual, and moral variety. This gradation, growing brighter as it rises higher, leads our thoughts up to the culmination of each, where all those forms, which are here seen as in a glass darkly, or hidden, like the beauty of the rose, in its bud, shall appear in full efflorescence beneath the eternal sunshine of the upper skies. In thus saying, we do not wish to be understood as teaching or suggesting the resurrection there, of the forms of lower orders; rather we would regard what is here imperfect, but which has evidently the elements of something better in it, which, however, on account of the curse which lies on it, never unfolds itself to the full extent of its own possibilities, as a dark prophecy of what will appear there in a glorious fulfilment. We ask only that these be regarded as the shadow of yonder substance; and that, as shadows, they be permitted to testify that the substance does exist. If these be but what the leaves and the petals of the flower which fall away are to the future fruit, we still ask that they may be permitted to point, as John the Baptist did, to Christ, and say, "We are not what shall come, but behold yonder it is."

Still further. Whether the latest results of geology are to be trusted in all their details, we cannot here discuss; neither is it necessary to justify the allusion we desire to make to this field of inquiry. Thus much

is certain, that the constitution of the earth bears signs of progress in organized forms. Some of the coarser and simpler forms of insect, animal, and perhaps also vegetable life, which characterized the earlier history of the world, seem to have been left behind, and to have passed away with the periods to which they belonged; while forms of higher, more refined, and complex organizations, have taken their place. He that carefully examines the history of the creation, in Genesis, will find some such process indicated in the order of time in which the different grades of creation were called forth. From the first general division of earth and firmament, of land and sea, until the whole is crowned with man in the image of God, there is a gradual progress from the lowest to the highest. This too, as we think, points us to the glorious hope that nature, which has hitherto been imperfect, and does still groan and travail towards a birth, is "waiting" with ourselves for the "adoption." / Every plant that grows up strugglingly towards Heaven, till it bursts forth on the top into a flower, sending its fragrance still higher as incense to God, ere it drops back again to earth, breathes itself away in plaintive prayer as it dies, that the beautiful may yet become permanent.

A little close attention to this subject, will enable us to see and understand how those forms of organization which make up the beauty of celestial scenery, may be, at least in part—for no doubt original forms will also there appear, increasing the joy of the saints with their pleasing varieties—the perfection and glorification of what is familiar to us here, without any violent dissimilarity in appearance. It is a prominent

feature in all the progressive developments of creative power, that identity is preserved in the midst of the greatest change, and that the lower glorifies itself by a change that cometh not by observation. When a sinner becomes a saint, his nature, and all his relations and affinities, are changed ; the change is as great as it can be, yet the individual retains his familiar identity to the view of others : he is, Oh ! how changed, yet the same man. So all that is now outward to us, forming the objective ground of our being, may reappear to us in a future life wonderfully changed, beautified, perfected, and permanent, while it shall remain to our familiar feelings the same as before.

The Scriptures in many places intimate to us the changes which shall appear to the saints in Heaven, in their outward or objective world. We cannot meditate upon them without rejoicing in the prospect of those glorious advantages which, in this respect, await us, and without having awakened in our hearts stronger longings for so bright, pure, and perfect an inheritance.

According to the teachings of revelation, there will be in the heavenly place no disharmony or disturbing forces in the physical constitution and order of things.

The belief that sin has affected the physical universe in those parts where it reigns, is agreeable to Scripture, reason, and experience, and is admitted by most of deep-thinking theologians. Evidently, the positions, movements, relations, and inclinations of planets and systems, especially of ours, are not the same as they would have been had sin not entered. When man, as the lord of creation, for whom sun, and moon, and

stars were made to know their course, sinned, they shrunk from their courses, turned in dark frowns toward him, and the reign of night and death began. Even if none of the heavenly orbs that stand related directly to the earth, had changed their relations to it, if the earth itself has changed in its writhings under the curse, it was sufficient to introduce the reign of gloom and death. There are evidences in abundance of such change of relation. The earth itself is held in its orbit by antagonisms! — by a force driving it away from its centre, and another force restraining it, like a sinner poised in the point where God's mercy and justice meet!

Now what are some of the effects of this abnormal relation of things? We answer, the introduction of various disturbing forces, unceasing collision and friction, wearing and tearing, blighting and blasting, and a ceaseless war of opposing interests, and laws ever crossing each other. As results, we have extremes of heat and cold, of darkness and light; and the laws of gravitation ever hurling back into primeval dust all forms of life that struggle after permanence and perfection. Hence we have barrenness and gloomy solitudes — in the polar regions snow, ice, and pitiless frost; in equatorial climes plains of burning sand, without blade, flower, or smiling fountain; and in places intermediate, a mixture of these. We have sweeping storms, which fly over us like angels of death. We have floods, which seem to have no law but their own rage. We have internal fires that hiss like serpents in their dens, and shake fearful tongues of flame from out the tops of mountains. We have earthquakes

that cause old earth to groan to its centre, and to shake at its poles, while its crust opens as a demon's jaws from the pit, engulfing landscapes and cities. This, and more that suggests itself, is enough to show a fulfilment of the prophecy: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake!"

Nor are these marks of the curse confined to the earth. There are marks of it in suns, stars, and systems around us. Astronomy speaks confidently, and from sure data, of spots in the sun, craters in the moon, of comets that seem wandering stars that scarce know their orbits or their centres; of dark planets, and "storm-swept solitudes in the outer darkness of creation." It is well known that stars have changed in appearance, have been broken into pieces, and that some have even disappeared from the heavens. The prophecy concerning the heavens is fulfilling from century to century: "They shall perish; but thou remainest: and they shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed."

Is there a region in the vast physical universe of God in which these disturbing forces do not exist, and where no such gloom-inspiring marks of a curse dim the fair face of unfallen nature? We have, in the preceding Chapter, had intimations affirmatively, even from discoveries of astronomical science. We are, however, not satisfied with these; but must be assured that revelation owns these suggestions of science to be in harmony with itself. Let us look at several allusions of Scripture to this point.

"There shall be no night there." We find that

commentators take this passage in its literal sense. "When it is said," says Barnes, "that there would be no *night* there, it is, undoubtedly, to be taken as meaning that there would be no *literal* darkness, and nothing of which night is the emblem." DR. WATTS, after mentioning that it is proper to apply this passage to those things of which darkness is the emblem, such as ignorance, affliction, and sin, says: "I choose rather at present to consider this word *night* in its literal sense." It points us—in harmony with what we know to be astronomically possible—to realms of "ETERNAL SUNSHINE!"

If now we inquire into the *cause* of night in this region of the universe, we find it in the present arrangement of our solar system—in the position, inclination, revolution, and orbit of the earth in that system. We need not show how the present arrangement of our system came to exist—whether it was from first what it is now; whether, in the innocence of man, it occupied a different position, from which it was hurled, with "the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation," (for they seem to have been already here when man was created,) and in the midst of whom God, for wise reasons, known to Himself alone, was pleased to place man on trial—or whether our earth is one of those "wandering stars," which, with their disobedient and rebellious spirits, were doomed to regions of "blackness of darkness." We need only refer ourselves to the obvious truth, that there are heavenly regions where those relations of systems and orbs to each other, which cause night, do not exist. We need only fix our minds on the in-

evitable inference, that, in a world where no night exists, these relations of physical nature which cause night cannot possibly have place. Thus we are brought to the sure conclusion, that nature, in its astronomical order, must there exist in a vastly different form.

Behold now what conceivable and inconceivable advantage rise to our view in the field of reflection thus laid open before us ! “There shall be no night there,” is to say : “There no dependent or secondary planets exist.” There, consequently, none of the unpleasant extremes involved in day and night are found. There no dark night-sides of nature cover the lovely face of paradisean realms. No cycles in the heavenly worlds ever cause the joyous life of the saints to ebb back from the waking energies of bliss into dull stupor, under the overshadowings of darkness and gloom ! That world needs no repose ; for life, in right relations, is rest in its own peaceful flow of bliss. The ebbings and flowings, which the transition from extremes of light and darkness, and of consequent heat and cold produce, belong only to a world of imperfection. Life and joy can never be negative in that world where all things are positively right, pure, and good.

In the night all things are hushed ; all life ebbs back towards its source ; all energies, like “weary worn-out winds,” fall fainting upon the earth, and a solemn prophecy of death, in deep sepulchral tones, murmurs over land and sea. Flowers fold their beauties to their hearts. Birds, like the captives in Babylon, hang their harps in the branches, and sing not in a strange land. Man, feeling the somnific sympathy, thinks no more, but wanders in dreams ; and, instead of enjoy-

ing, he lies, like a senseless clod, in the dull absence of all joy. But, before the words, "There shall be no night there!" all these signs of imperfection, which here have their cause in the arrangement of the objective world, have forever passed away. There all nature, basking in unsullied light, smiling in the purest joy, and blissfully tremulous in the thrill of eternal life, dawns in upon the spirits of the sainted, without measure and without end!

In perfect harmony with these remarks, it is declared, in reference to our Heavenly Home, "The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." Amazing conception! So harmonious and complete a manifestation of God's creative will is the objective heaven of the saints, that it is itself, without reflection, the Divine Shekinah, transparent with His radiant holiness, and blissful in the fulness of His own nature. From this heavenly place we but dimly discover the far-off regions of "variableness and shadow of turning," which characterize our present dark, sinful, and sorrowful abode. Well may the weeping millions in the Church that waiteth for Him, turn their longing eyes from these shades of earth towards that blessed land of hope, calling to each other in the words of encouragement: "There shall be no night there!"

"There shall be no more curse." This passage also directs us to the fact that, in the heavenly world, no such disturbing forces, and no such uncongenial forms of physical organization and physical order, as those referred to, exist. The word "curse," *καταδεμα*,

expresses, with exactness and great force, the disorder introduced into the physical world by sin. The “curse” is a rising up *against*, and an *interfering with*, the harmonious course of the originally established order. Accordingly we read that the earth after the “curse,” even in its vegetable kingdom, rose up against man, yielding, contrary to its original order, and against the interests of man, “thorns and thistles;” these, crowding in upon the old order of food-giving vegetables, shall cause him to allure out of the earth, and eat his bread with sorrow, amid toil and in the sweat of his face, till he sink under the burden into the earth from which he was taken. We need not say how exactly this threatening prophecy has been fulfilled. This evil is taken away in the heavenly paradise. Hence the restoration of this original, harmonious order is mentioned in direct connection with the taking away of the curse. “In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse.”

This rising up against man, which was introduced by the curse, is not confined to vegetable forms. It is seen, as has been shown, in the astronomical disorder which affects injuriously, in so many ways, the advantage of man. It is seen in the animal creation, in hissing, venomous serpents, and in beasts and birds of prey. It is seen in insects, many of which interfere with the happiness of man, or which are tolerated painfully as lesser inconveniences, to hinder greater.

The evidences of the curse are innumerable, as they exist around us. The very fear which almost all the lower orders manifest at the presence of man, and their disposition to fly from him, betrays the fact that a right relation does not exist between them.

We are taught, however, that in all these particulars, the original peace and concord shall again be restored.

O scenes surpassing fable, and yet true,
Scenes of accomplished bliss !

The serpent, the adder, the asp, the lion, the wolf, the leopard, the bear, all, all will be harmless, and nothing shall hurt or destroy in all the holy mountain. Is. xi. The locust, the caterpillar, the palmer-worm, the canker-worm, shall no more desolate, neither shall any more "moth corrupt." The air will no more bear mildew to blight, neither will frosts blast the flower, or kill the fruit. The seasons, which now swing from extreme to extreme, reigning over the doubly mournful mockery of bloom and decay, will present life without death. The trees of life will bear "*every month.*" The jubilate of eternal spring will ever mingle with the grateful songs of an abiding harvest. Nature itself will be glorified in the robes of immortality, and "there shall be no more curse!"

"There shall be no more death." What else but death can be looked for as the last result of all these disturbing and conflicting forces of physical nature? "The waters wear the stones." As for man: "Thou prevalest forever against him, and he passeth." As the strongest monuments of earth wear and waste under the silent gnawings of time, so this earthly

house of man's tabernacle must wear away under the constant friction of disturbing forces, and death must be the result.

True, death is the result of sin—it is caused by sin. This, however, does not hinder us from believing that it is hastened, if not entirely effected, by the mediation of the derangement of the physical world— influences averse to life making inroads upon the system. We know that death is hastened, and, in many instances, produced by objective influences. We know too, that as death is effected by a process, the causes which produce it cannot strike at once at the seat and centre of life, else it would be no process, but that they must work from the outward and less vital parts inward. We may be sure also, that, as no perfect salvation from death can find place here, but awaits a transfer into a better objective world—and even so far as this salvation can take place, it is by means of the church, as an objective institution—the cause of death, or the power of it, must be an objective one, invading the life from circumference towards centre, and thus rests in, or at least is active through, the curse that pervades outward nature. To say, then, that "there shall be no more death," is the same as to say, that those influences and disturbing forces, which have their ground in the derangements of physical nature on which our physical being rests, are not found there. How can the organization of the spiritual body be disturbed, when it and the objective world are in perfect harmony with each other? Where the subjective and objective are in unison, there can be no more death.

Hence also there shall be, in that heavenly world,

"neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." The causes of all these evils are surmounted. Not only shall sorrow of heart be left behind, but also all those distressing sensations which are caused here by an uncongenial and disordered outward world. "Behold, I make all things new!" exclaims He who sits upon the throne. As death does not enter there, neither can sighs, groans, and pains, which are the precursors of it. "The inhabitants shall not say, I am sick." Is. 23, 24. As there is, in those pure climes, no "noisome pestilence," therefore "the sun shall not smite by day, nor the moon by night."

Why need we confine the declaration, "there shall be no more death," to man alone? Does it not include nature also, in all its forms? There nothing shall die. Not only the saints that enter it, but the INHERITANCE itself, is "incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away, but is reserved in Heaven." Not only those who go there, but that which they go to, that which is reserved, is unfading—amaranthine, as it is in the original. "This reminds us of living and blooming forms, of green groves, of eternal youth, and of every variety of living creations. There is the sweet south of the eternally beautiful." Did not the Saviour Himself speak of Heaven as Paradise, which reminds us at once of that Eden of beauties and delights where "the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight."

We know that those bowers are green and fair,
In the light of that summer shore,
And we know that the friends we have lost are there,
They are there—and they weep no more.

"There was no more sea." The sea not only contracts man's activities, confines him to places, hinders and endangers the intercourse of nations, but also presents wide wastes unfit for the abodes of man—three-fourths of the earth's surface being covered with sea. Besides this, and what is more directly to our purpose, it is a vast reservoir from which the earth must be replenished, and upon which it is dependent. This replenishing must be at intervals, by which parts of the earth are frequently exposed to equally destructive extremes of moisture and drought. This is no normal order, but belongs to that class of physical derangements already referred to. It is plainly intimated in Genesis, that before the fall there were none of these periodical replenishings; "for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth." Nature gently and steadily refreshed its productions by the operations of a more refined law: "There went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground."

The present position of the water in one place exposes the earth to dry and scorching months, and then again to gloomy seasons of wet; and even to partial deluges and floods, which devastate the earth, and often destroy the hopes, and even the lives of men. This is part and parcel of the ancient curse. It shall not exist in Heaven; for there, we are assured, there will be no more sea. May we not safely conclude from this declaration, that in that land,

Where everlasting spring abides,
And never withering flowers,

no such refreshings as the sea furnishes, through mist, dew, showers and streams, are needed. In that world of life, life is perennial in the vigor of its own undying nature. What a Paradise is that, where no leaf withers, and where no flower fades !

“Neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, thieves do not break through nor steal.” Here also does the Saviour refer to the fact that earth is afflicted with disturbing forces which cause all things that are of earth to pass away. “How particularly,” says Prof. Lange, “does He here characterize those disturbing forces which reign here below, in that He calls them moth, rust, and thieves ! In calling them rust, he designates all chemical disturbing principles. In calling them moth, he designates the enemies of vegetable and animal organisms. In calling them thieves, he refers to ethical disturbing principles.” How wide in its application is the fact that chemical influences, silently as rust, corrode the face of inanimate nature ! How extensively do insects, quietly as moth, hasten on death and decay in the animate creation ! In how many ways does sin, the great moral evil, as with thievish hand, steal away all that is pure and good—steal away heart, hope, and Heaven !

The same passage of the Saviour, however, directs our attention to the fact that these evils exist not in the higher sphere, and exhorts us to turn away from the perishable to that which perishes not. “Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.”

What a pure world for the pure ! What forms of

holy beauty bloom in sight beneath the upper skies ! How different from the sin-soiled earth. "There no idol temples pollute groves and mountain tops. There no spirit of horror broods over ancient battle-fields, and spots where dark deeds were done. There no frightful Golgothas, or places of skulls, waken up remembrances and associations of guilt and death. There no dark spirits rule in the air, or dwell amid desolations and tombs. There is no ground which once drank the blood of martyrs, or of God's own son." There no serpents hiss under the tree of life, or bruise the heel of those white-robed ones that stray by the fountains of living water. There no foul worms creep forth from the heart of ripening fruit, and no poisonous, softly stealing death, revels on the cheek of beauty. Bright, pure, and blessed world ! Life without death. Beauty without blemish. Bloom without decay.

No sickness there,
No weary wasting of the frame away,
No fearful shrinking from the midnight air,
No dread of summer's bright and fervid ray !

No hidden grief,
No wild and cheerless vision of despair ;
No vain petition for a swift relief,
No tearful eye, no broken heart, are there.

Care has no home
Within that realm of ceaseless praise and song—
Its tossing billows break and melt in foam,
Far from the mansions of the spirit-throng.

The storm's black wing
Is never spread athwart celestial skies,
Its wailings blend not with the voice of Spring,
As some too tender floweret fades and dies.

No night distils
Its chilling dews upon the tender frame ;
No morn is needed there ! the light which fills
The land of glory, from its Maker came.

No parted friends
O'er mournful recollections have to weep—
No bed of death enduring love attends,
To watch the coming of a pulseless sleep !

No withered flower
Or blasted bud celestial gardens know !
No scorching blast, or fierce descending shower
Scatters destruction like a ruthless foe.

No battle-word
Startles the sacred hosts with fear and dread !
The song of peace, Creation's morning heard,
Is sung wherever angel footsteps tread !

Let us depart,
If home like this await the weary soul !
Look up, thou stricken one ! thy wounded heart
Shall bleed no more at sorrow's stern control.

With Faith our guide,
White-robed and innocent to tread the way,
Why fear to plunge in Jordan's rolling tide,
And find the Haven of Eternal day.

CHAPTER IX.

The Glorified Body.

As first downward the spirit incarnates itself in the body, so afterwards upwards, the body is glorified in the spirit.

OLSHAUSEN.

FOR the idea that our happiness in Heaven is to be increased by the glorious perfection of the body, we are indebted entirely to the Sacred Scriptures. Human reason, unenlightened by revelation, would guess just the reverse. Hence it has been common for the wisdom of this world to regard the body as an enemy to the soul; and escaping from it, and from all matter, has been considered the height of salvation.

The reason and ground of this hatred to matter is, beyond doubt, to be sought in the ancient philosophical idea of two eternal principles existing independently of each other, matter and spirit. It was taken as a self-evident truth, that "nothing can produce nothing;" but, as matter exists, and was not made out of nothing, it must have existed, alongside of spirit, from all eternity, as an absolute and independent principle. If it has—so they reasoned—then there are two eternal existences, spirit and matter; then also it follows that these two are rivals, and opposed

to each other. Hence as God, or Spirit, is the eternal principle of Good, matter is the eternal principle of Evil. This evil principle has allured Spirit into its embraces, and enslaved it, and has always held it under its power for evil ends. Hence to be redeemed from this dark captivity to matter is salvation.

Hence Pagan philosophy regarded the body as "the prison and sepulchre of the soul." Celcus says, "The hope of the resurrection of the flesh is the hope of worms, a filthy, an abominable, an impossible thing, which God neither will nor can do, being base and contrary to nature." Henee, when Paul preached at Athens, and referred to the resurrection of the dead, "some mocked." It was under the influence of this mode of thinking, that so many primitive heretics denied so stoutly the resurrection of the flesh.

The Scriptures, on the contrary, hold up this destiny of the body as one of the sweetest hopes of a Christian. What the wisdom of the world despises, is the glory of religion. By all the Apostles, "Jesus and the resurrection" are held up as one and the same blessed hope. The resurrection of Christ is exhibited as the pledge and promise of all that is involved in salvation. 1 Cor. xv. 13-20. The salvation of the soul, according to their teachings, itself only becomes complete in the resurrection of the body. Separated, for a time, from the body, which sinks under the power of death, the soul still feels bound to it as the complement of itself, and moans after its absence like a lone dove for its mate. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth, and travaileth in pain together until now: and not only they, but ourselves also, which have

the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Rom. viii. 22, 23. Heb. xi. 35.

Every Christian feels, by a deep spiritual instinct, the genial joy which the promise of the resurrection of the body inspires. This promise brings to the spirit a feeling of ingenuous pleasure, like that which we experience in the prospect of some scene of peculiar happiness, to which our dearest friend is to accompany us. The body is not merely a companion to us, it is a part of us; and to be separated from it must leave, not positive unhappiness, but nevertheless a sense of want, which must be supplied, for the present, by a promise. This promise is graciously given to the saints. "We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body." Phil. iii. 21. "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." 1 Cor. xv. 52, 53.

It is surprising, to a close observer, how much many Christians are yet practically held in bondage under a pagan dread of matter. Though professedly holding to the resurrection of the body, and, in moments of undefined religious meditation, even drawing a degree of comfort from it, yet they virtually ignore it in their general ideas of a future life. Practically, the body is treated as an enemy. They forget that the Saviour sanctified matter, and raised it into union with spirit, in his incarnation; and that he has put infinite honor

upon the human body by triumphing over death in it, and in its behalf! They forget that the sinless body of our first parents, when it left the hands of its Maker, was pronounced **VERY GOOD**: that it became weak, corrupted, and dishonorable by sin, but that it is again to be made powerful, incorruptible, and glorious by redemption, and restored to a better Paradise than that lost by the fall.

Instead of feeling contempt for the body, we ought to be inspired with reverence and gratitude at the glorious prospect of happiness which we are to secure by means of our material relations and affinities. What an overwhelming idea of what may be in another world do we get, when we contemplate what already is! “when, with an eye of devotional, or even scientific feeling, we look abroad into the natural world under the present state of things; and behold in what an infinite multiplicity of shapes, and forms, and textures, and modifications, this same degraded substrate of matter is rendered the basis of beauty and energy, and vitality and enjoyment; equally striking in the little and in the great; in the blade of grass we trample under foot, and in the glorious sun that rouses it from its winter sleep, and quickens it into verdure and fragrancy; from the peopled earth to the peopled heavens; to the spheres on spheres, and systems on systems, that above, below, and all around us fulfil their harmonious courses, and from age to age

In mystic dance, not without song, resound
His praise, who out of darkness called up light.”*

* Good's Book of Nature, pp. 324, 325.

There is something in our spiritual constitution which absolutely demands a connection with matter for its own perfection. It is the spirit, not matter, that is the gainer by this connection. "It is absolutely indifferent to matter whether it be left in a grosser state, or be wrought into a more elaborate form. On the contrary, by compounding itself with matter, mind takes possession of a world foreign to itself; and, in a sense, doubles its powers of action and its sphere of existence."

Taylor, in his Physical Theory of another life, from which we have just quoted, shows, by a masterly philosophical discussion, that the spirit, instead of detriment, receives many advantages from its connection with matter in the body. At the close of the discussion these advantages are summed up thus: "The occupation of place, or a relation to space and extension—the consciousness of equable motion, or a knowledge of time; the consciousness of the properties of matter, or sensation; an active power over matter, to originate motion; the susceptibility of imaginative emotions, and of mixed moral sentiments; and a defined recognizable individuality."* We need not review the path over which this Author travels, as we can convince ourselves in a nearer way, by taking the general scriptural ground, that salvation includes the salvation of the whole man, the body as well as the spirit, and that in the perfection and eternal union of both in Heaven, consists the highest bliss of man. "I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness." Ps. xvii. 15.

* Physical Theory, Chapter II.

We will now examine the nature and attributes of our future bodies, so far as we have light from divine revelation to guide us. By this inquiry we shall be led into a definite, yet sober and safe, contemplation of that felicity into which the reception of glorified bodies shall introduce us. As the study of the eye is necessary to a correct understanding of that world of light which lies before us in this life, so the study of the nature of our glorified bodies is indispensable to a proper conception of that world of beauty and bliss, which shall be spread out before our sainted vision in the life to come. As the glorified body there, as here, will be the medium through which the Spirit will commune with the outer world, we must know the nature, attributes, and capacities of that medium, in order to measure the bliss which will be enjoyed by "the spirits of just men made perfect."

SECTION I.

THE RELATION OF THE EARTHLY TO THE HEAVENLY BODY.

There is no death: what seems so is transition;
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the life Elysian,
Whose portals we call death.

LONGFELLOW.

WE seek the germs of the future life in the present life. In like manner do we seek the attributes and capacities of the future body in that body which now envelopes our life. We discover in ourselves powers

and processes which plainly point and reach towards a higher sphere. Every change that goes forward in us is an evidence of this.

Change may, on a superficial view, seem like the indication of a downward process, but it is only so apparently. All decay is but the manifestation of a hidden life, throwing off its rougher limitations, that it may grow into perfect freedom. Beneath death there is a deeper life. Life is older and stronger than death, and hence ever seeks to surmount it. Death is only death as viewed from the earthly side ; as viewed from the heavenly side, it is *birth* ! Death is ever swallowed up in victory ; and that life which secures this victory is ever to be recognized, in its incipient attributes, in the midst of that decay and death which the evolution of life produces.

This is richly taught both by analogy and by Scripture. It is change, but is it death, when the golden-winged butterfly escapes from the worm-formed larva, and soars through the skies ? It is death to what was in reality death before, not to anything that had life ; for the chrysalis was not life, but only the covering of it. In like manner we say it is change, but is it death, when "this earthly house of our tabernacle is dissolved ?" The Apostle, in answer to the question, "How are the dead raised up ? and with what body do they come ?" says, "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." As the germ in spring time emerges in vigor and in beauty from the bosom of the rotting seed, so there arises ever out of decay the joyous infancy of immortal life. That which fades and turns to dust in autumn, becomes the manure that

feeds those germs which its decay leaves untouched behind it. As long as we see that, in the place where the faded flower grew, there appears the better and more substantial fruit, we have the sweet assurance that the garlands and buds of promise, which seem to perish around the tomb of human glory, will be succeeded by the rich fruition of an imperishable life.

In regard to the relation of the present to the future body, there are two extremes of error, both of which are old. On the one hand, some have thought and taught, that the future body is something entirely different from the present body—that the body cast off in death comes in no sense into requisition again—and that the resurrection body is in no way the continuation or product of this mortal body. This seems to have been the idea of those heretics whom Paul tells Timothy to shun, who taught “that the resurrection is past already;” that is, that it is entirely spiritual, that it is accomplished in regeneration, and has no reference to the body. This also was the idea of the ancient Gnostics. It has been revived in more modern times by Swedenborg; and has, still more lately, been defended by much apparently plausible philosophy, in a work on the Resurrection, by Prof. Bush.

The other extreme of error is the attempt to preserve such a gross and carnal identity of the present with the future body, in a mere outward way, as to bring the doctrine of the resurrection into serious conflict with well-established laws of physical science. In this way difficulties to this scriptural doctrine have

been raised, to which many a polemical chapter has been devoted, without rendering any solid satisfaction to earnest inquirers. As, whether it is the matter in the body when it dies which will be raised, or that which composed its material contents at some previous period? What is to be thought and said as to the constant changes going forward in the matter of the body, which makes it an entirely new body every seven years? What must be thought of those cases where bodies are taken up, at least in part, into other bodies; as when bodies are dissolved on battle-fields, the matter of which is turned into vegetables and grain, which, by being consumed, enter into other organizations; or, as in the case of Cannibals, where the matter of one body enters in some proportion into that of another. All such "learned questions" are the fruits of this extreme of holding too outward and gross an identity of the present with the future body.

The scriptural idea lies between these two extremes, including the truth that is in both. The extremes are destroyed by having their substance included. The history of the whole relation of the present to the future body is covered by the following points in a process. I. There is the dissolution of the present body—its return to its original elements. II. The evolution of the future body out of the present. III. The continuous identity of the present and the future body through the transformation. These points are all involved in the Apostle's answer to the question, "How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?" He represents the matter thus: "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it

die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain; it may chance of wheat or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." 1 Cor. xv. 36-38.

The seed, in its dissolution, evolution, and continued identity in the new plant and seed, is the symbol which the Apostle uses to set forth the relation of the body that dies to that which rises and lives forever.

I. There is Dissolution. "That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die."

The going down of the body into the grave is like laying seed into the earth. The seed dies—is resolved into its elemental state. So the body which now is undergoes dissolution. The matter of which it is composed, and which, as long as the spirit inhabits it, is held under the power of the laws of life, now loses its affinities to these laws, and again becomes entirely subject to those laws of attraction and gravitation which rule unorganized matter. "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, and dust to dust." This matter, however, in the case of the seed, though it is dissolved, still sustains a relation to the new plant and seed of which it is the mother. It nurses the germ of the new plant in its bosom, imparting of itself to it in its growth. It is the condition of its development. Its death is life to the plant. Without its death there is no life to the new plant, for "that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die." Like this is the relation still subsisting between the old body which decays, and the new body of which it is the womb. This relation, as in that of the old seed to the new, is a vital

one. It cannot be destroyed. The old body is just as necessary to the new as the old decaying grain is to the new plant, and to the new seed.

II. This relation of the present to the future body involves accordingly evolution. "That which thou sowest, thou sowest *not that body that shall be*, but bare grain; it may chance of wheat or of some other grain, but God *giveth it a body* as it hath pleased him."

Here is change, but only change by evolution. Not destruction of the old alone, but destruction of the old in the evolution of the new. The old disappears by entering vitally into the new. The new plant is not the old grain — the new grain, on the top of it, is not the restoration of the old grain after it has been dissolved into its original substance. Neither, on the other hand, is it something entirely new and different, made independently of, and separate from, the old grain; but it is evolved out of the old, and remains still part of it.

This evolution, moreover, does not take up in its process the entire matter of the old grain; but rather only the substance of it. In like manner the earth receives the elements of the dissolving body, and in time, like a true mother, yields back again such elements as are needed in the new being. It is a deep saying of the Saviour, "So is the Kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring, and grow up, he knoweth not how." Mark iv. 26, 27. "The decaying of the insignificant and unsightly seed in the earth, and the rising up out of that decay and death, of the graceful stalk and the

fruitful ear, contains evermore the prophecy of the resurrection, even as this is itself in its kind a resurrection — the same process at a lower stage — the same power putting itself forth upon meaner things.” *

As regeneration does not destroy the old man, but perfects the new man under cover of the old, till the old passes away in the presence and power of the new, so the new body is evolved from the womb of the old. Thus the body which dies is not “the body that shall be,” no more than the dying grain is the future stalk, or the future grain. “God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him.”

III. Yet this relation involves the identity of the old and the new body through the transformation. God giveth “to every seed its own body.”

Not, however, an identity of matter in quantity, but the identity of inward substance in the power of a continuous life. This deep truth is best expressed by the paradox: the same, and yet never the same. Evolution allows of no breaks in identity. The seed which perishes in the earth repeats itself again on the top of the stalk, and this has not only in it of the substance of the perished seed, but has also, in all its history, been in living unbroken connection with it in the power of one life. The seed on the top of the stalk would not be there, if the identity of the process involved in the history of the plant between it and the old seed, had in the least been interrupted.

The Apostle shows, farther, by an illustration, how other analogies in nature also shadow forth this identity in difference. He shows that the same organiza-

* Trench on the Parables, p. 19.

tion can exist with a difference of quality in its matter; and that is clearly to be seen in the world around us. He asks us first to look abroad on the earth: "All flesh is not the same flesh; but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds. He asks us to look at the earth and the heavens in contrast: "There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another." He asks us to observe the difference between bodies even in the same celestial regions: "There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory." In like manner would the Apostle say, there can be a great difference between the old body and the new, and yet its identity may remain: "So is the resurrection of the dead."

We find also analogies that exhibit this kind of identity in change and transformation, abundant and striking around us in the insect and animal creation, as well as in the vegetable kingdom. We find everywhere that "in every case where a transition from one mode of life to another is to take place, the germs of the future being are wrapped in the organization of the present being," as in the case of moth, caterpillars, and locusts. Though in the transition something is left behind, and much is gained, yet the identity of the being remains unbroken through every stage of the transformation.

The Scriptures, in various places and ways, warrant us in the interpretation and application which we have made of the analogies involved in the Apostle's figure.

They teach not only a “resurrection at the last day,” but also a present resurrection — a resurrection beginning in regeneration, centrally in the spirit, and becoming perfect in the final resurrection of the body. Thus Jesus speaks to Martha of the resurrection as always present in Him. When He said to her, “Thy brother shall rise again,” she, having in her mind the resurrection only as a sudden resuscitation of the body at the last day, answered: “I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” To which Jesus replied: “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth, and believeth in me, shall never die.”

Christians are said to be “risen with Christ.” To them Paul says, “ye are dead;” and the life which you now live is a life “hidden with Christ in God.” The life of Christ in his people is the principle and power of the resurrection — it is a resurrection now, and will be a complete one in the resurrection at the last day. What, then, should hinder us from believing that beneath the coarse exterior of our earthly life the soul is silently and secretly weaving for itself the unseen and most refined tissue-work of its future being. Thus the new man, not only in soul, but also in body, like the insects in their chrysalis state, is gradually growing towards that glorious transformation which is called “the resurrection at the last day,” and which is analogous to that period in worm life when the shell is burst and cast aside, and when the grovelling life is suddenly exchanged for soaring freedom.

We may go farther still, and ask, Cannot close ob-

servation even now discern outward evidences of such inward change? Contrast an aged saint—one who has led a temperate and holy life, restraining and ordering all his passions by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost—contrast such an one with an aged sinner, in whom all the passions and lusts of the flesh have been permitted to work themselves out to a horrid perfection. Observe closely the difference, and say, whether in the one case it does not seem as if the body were becoming radiant with a heavenly beauty, from the holy light that dwells within; and say whether, in the other case, it does not seem as if the darkness of the unrenewed soul did shade the outward man with its own frightful gloom. "See we not," says one, "in our neighbors and friends how long habit impresses their characters upon their faces? and we admire and respect more and more the cheerful countenance of frankness and innocence, the calm and noble brow of contemplation, the mild, serene eye of holiness, the beaming deep-seated smile of charity; and we shrink with increasing horror from the leer of lust, the idiotcy of drunkenness, the scowl of malignity, the contracted features of cunning and fraud. Thus they appear to announce themselves to be on their various stages, and in divers ways, toward their final state of the body, when, no longer being in a flux between decay and renewal, it shall be unchangeable, directed and informed by an unchangeable mind, for all eternity."*

While Paul's symbol of the seed seems, thus, to require an inward identity, through change and transformation, the analogy seems also to require the preser-

* Evans's Ministry of the Body, p. 172.

vation of some sameness in the outward form. “God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed *his own* body;” that is, the same body which its predecessor had, or the body which belongs to its kind. The comparison between the body that is sown and the body which shall be, does not seem to be between the seed in the earth and the stalk that grows from it, but rather between the seed that is in the earth and that which is formed on the top of the stalk—the history of the stalk being regarded as the intervening transformation period. Thus, as the seed in the earth, in time, repeats itself in the new seed, so the analogy requires us to think that the form of the celestial body will preserve the image of the body which has perished in the grave. The Saviour appeared after His resurrection in a body which presented the same outward appearance as that in which He dwelt among His disciples before His death, and which enabled them to recognize Him by those marks of identity by which they knew Him before. Moses and Elias, on the mount of transfiguration, evidently appeared in bodies fashioned after that type which is familiar to us here. “We assume then, that the apparent import of some passages and phrases of Scripture tend to suggest the belief that the die of human nature, as to its form and figure, is to be used in a new world. Partly on the ground of inferences from general principles, and partly on the strength of particular assertions, we suppose that the fair and faultless paradisaical model of human beauty and majesty, which stood forward as the illustrious instance of creative wisdom—the bright gem of the visible world—this form too, which has

been borne and consecrated by incarnate Deity—that it shall at length regain its forfeited honors, and once more be pronounced ‘very good;’ so good as to forbid its being superseded; on the contrary, that it shall be reinstated, and allowed, after its long degradation, to enjoy its birthright of immortality.”*

Persons who are slow to believe, speak of mysteries in the resurrection, and so there are; but mystery is not synonymous with difficulty. What we call mystery is perfectly natural and easy in a higher order of things. The Scripture view of the relation of our present to our future body, conflicts with no known law of physical science; we see, rather, how natural science ever illustrates and confirms to our weakness the deepest truths of revelation. We are easily reconciled to what we are not able to fathom in the transformation of our bodies while passing through the change of death and the grave, when we consider that the appearance of the same seed at the top of the stalk involves the same mysteries in its history as does the history of the body which dies on earth, to live in due time on high. In the one case, the old grain is laid in the earth, and appears again in the same type above the earth; in the other case, the old body is laid in the earth to appear again in the same type in Heaven. In regard to time, the one appears again at the return of the season, the other at the end of the world. In the one case, the history of the intervening transformation period is visible—though only outwardly, and in that part which is above the earth—in the other

* Taylor's Physical Theory, pp. 130, 131.

case its history lies in an order of things which is not open to the inspection of the senses.

If it is objected, that the great gulf which, to our eyes and to our knowledge, seems to exist between death and the final resurrection, renders such idea of continued identity improbable, if not impossible; we reply, not more so than the plant period makes it impossible for the seed, which perishes below, to appear above—not more so than the worm period which intervenes between the embryo egg and the winged insect, makes it impossible for the preparatory stages towards the final transformation to be going on during that period—and going on, too, beyond our power of sight, and independent of our previous knowledge from experience—even beyond our power of suspecting! When shall we learn, surrounded as we are with mysteries, that our ignorance is not the measure of what is, or what is possible?

The change from the earthly into the heavenly body brings with it, of course, vast and glorious advantages. It is a change from that which is imperfect into that which is perfect. In glory, and in capacity for happiness, that which perishes in the grave is, with emphasis, not that which shall be! The seed which appears on the stem is not superior to that which dies, but is doomed, like its predecessor, to return to the dust whence it sprang; not so with the body. It appears in nobler form.

It is with mournful feelings, and yet with grateful joy, that we here contemplate the point where the analogy between the plant and the glorified body ends! The perfected seed falls from the eminence

which it had reached, and perishes, as did the one before it. Thus nature strives ever, but strives in vain, to perfect itself, and to reach a state of permanent glorification. Its fruits, as the efflorescence of its mightiest struggles, are but the return of its previous condition! The life of plants, like the hopes of the heathen, promises only an endless transmigration. The same life returns in a new, but not in a higher form. It is here, however, that the blessed fact of the glorification of the human body, in the case of the saints, far outstrips the analogy. The evolution of the body which shall be, reaches a permanent state in a higher life. It attains what lower nature struggles after, but cannot reach. The type, the prophecy, as it exists in the lower order of nature, is out-reached and left behind, while the glorious antitype, the blessed fulfilment remains. It is only man, as the highest point, as the efflorescence of nature, that rises above it, into a state of permanent glory. It is because his earthly Adamic being is brought under the power of the renewing life of the second Adam—the archetypal man—and, in Him, reaches its perfection and permanence. “I am the resurrection and the life. Because I live ye shall live also. He shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself.” Flowers bloom and die again; but when the body reaches its bloom, it is eternally glorified in its beauty. The seed is perfected, and perishes again; but the body is perfected, and in that perfection the beautiful is made permanent! Every stage of our ascent is glory attained

that can be lost no more. Our transformation is, at the same time, a glorification. "They that shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, can die no more; for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

Corruption, earth, and worms,
Shall but refine this flesh,
Till my triumphant spirit comes
To put it on afresh.

SECTION II.

THE MATERIALITY OF THE GLORIFIED BODY.

Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me, and see: for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

OUR SAVIOUR.

WE need not enter upon a logical proof that the glorified body of the saints will be material. This is involved in the very idea of body. To deny it is to deny the resurrection; it is to stand on pagan ground; it is to rob the incarnation of Christ and his resurrection of all their glorious meaning; it is to ignore the salvation of the one side of our nature; and it is to withstand the teachings of the Church in all ages as to the sense of the Scriptures on this point. As the resurrection of Christ in his veritable body, and the resurrection of all His saints in similar bodies in and through Him potentially, is the very central and

triumphing point of Christianity over sin, death, and hell, the denial of the resurrection, in such a form, involves the entire reconstruction of that Christian system which has come down to us, by historical continuity, from Christ. Such an idea no one, who has not been spoiled by vain philosophy, or a perverted heart, can for a moment tolerate.

Taking it then for granted that the glorified body will be material, we are at present concerned only with the nature of that materiality, and the manner in which the happiness of the saints is affected by it.

We have already, in a previous Section, presented some reasons for the belief that the future physical organization will retain its present type, or outward form. The points of difference between the present and future body will concern, not so much outward form, as inward contents—not so much quantity, as quality—not so much order, as nature.

We would say, first, that the materiality of the glorified body must be materiality in its highest and most refined state.

Man's physical structure, even in the present life, is the noblest of all known organizations. It is in reference to his body that the Psalmist says; “I am fearfully and wonderfully made.” In no organism, beside the human body, is matter so nearly allied to spirit, and so transparent with the transfused glories of a higher world. In man's body the image of God is represented in a material form!

Still more. In the incarnation of Christ, Deity is personally united with matter. This is the house in which God dwells! The Saviour, being “in fashion

as a man," united the infinite spirit with finite matter; "and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." This, of course, was matter in its greatest refinements, and in its highest perfection.

In the heavenly world all ungenial influences are taken away. There no friction exists, to wear and tear glorified forms. The saints are exposed to no extremes. There perfect harmony between the spirit and the external world exists. Here, amid rude winds, amid moth, rust, and decay, such bodies would be like a delicate summer flower amid the snows and frosts of the north. There, that insatiableness of matter to draw all to itself, and that consequent ceaseless silent gnawing of influences, which, in this world, seeks to break down all living organizations to its own desolate level, is known no more. Life is active in eternal repose. Sabbath peace reigns over that bright world. Such a place is congenial to refined organizations. In this world we are furnished with a coarser covering, one suited to the rough external world in which we live; there we shall be furnished with bodies adapted to the place. "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."

When we say that the glorified bodies of the saints must be materiality in its highest state, we would not be understood to mean the highest degree of intangibility. Some, we cannot help but think, have erred in this extreme. There is a way of speaking on this

subject which, while it designs to do honor to the resurrection state, makes it virtually no resurrection at all. In this respect the old German proverb has much significance: "What is too pointed does not pierce, and what is too sharp does not cut." Take an example of that sublimation which makes the glorified body intangible to the senses. Prof. Hitchcock suggests that the future body of the saints may be composed of a substance which, though incognizable by the senses, is generally believed to exist—"the lumiferous ether, that attenuated medium by which light, and heat, and electricity are transmitted from one part of the universe to the other, by undulations of inconceivable velocity." Upon this supposition, this same author suggests, "the spiritual body would be unaffected by all possible changes of temperature. It might exist as well in the midst of fire, or of ice, as in any intermediate temperature. Some, indeed, have imagined that the sun will be the future Heaven of the righteous; and, on this supposition, there is no absurdity in the theory. Nor would there be in the hypothesis which would locate Heaven in solid ice, or in the centre of the earth. Though the whole globe should dash upon worlds, the spiritual body, though present at the very point where the terrible collision took place, would feel no injury; and, safe in its immortal habitation, the soul might smile amid "the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds.''"! We present this merely with a view of affording the reader a specimen of a strange kind of extravagant speech on this subject, which has become far too common in the later

theological speculations. We very much doubt whether that faith which can etherialize itself into any comfortable acquiescence in such theories, can pronounce, with any degree of steadiness, the article of our undoubted Christian faith: "I believe in the resurrection of the body."

The only attempt that has been made, so far as we have seen, to sustain from Scripture such sublimated ideas in reference to the resurrection bodies of the saints, has been by citing the fact that the Saviour appeared in the room, in the midst of his disciples, "when the doors were shut." His appearing in this way is, however, not any more wonderful than his frequent appearance in a body tangible to the senses is, upon the supposition that His resurrection body was not cognizable to the senses. Let it be well considered whether it is not more natural to believe that He entered the room by a miracle, than that He should have miraculously assumed a tangible body every time He appeared to His disciples. He did appear frequently in a tangible body. Now was this a sham? Or did He incarnate Himself anew in a cognizable body at every appearance? Is not the difficulty of such a supposition vastly greater than His appearance in the room in a tangible body when the doors were shut?

This much have we thought it necessary to say by way of guard against a tendency which makes refinement of matter synonymous with intangibility.

We remark farther, that the materiality of the glorified body must be wholly under the power of life. This is another, and very prominent feature in its perfection. In the present state the spirit is plainly,

to an extent, under the power of the body. This, however, by no means forces us to the conclusion that, according to the old pagan notion, the body is an enemy to the spirit. On the contrary it is its shield of protection, as the rough bark which covers the tree, or the coarse outer petals of the flower protect the delicate movements of the inward life against the ungenial influences of a disordered world. Still, none the less would these limitations, which befriend the spirit in this life, be a clog to its freer operations in a life where there is nothing to fear from an uncongenial objective world. There the body will cast off its rougher limitations, and the activities of the spirit will so penetrate and transfuse the materiality of the body, as to bring it entirely under the power of life. What an advantage will thus be gained! Then "mortality shall be swallowed up of life."

This is not yet. We see but the prophecy of it in our present state. Divine life in the Christian is as yet a struggle with the laws of death—a striving for the mastery. The body enslaves the soul by nature, but by grace the spirit learns to master the material. The Christian is fleshly, earthly, and sensual, in so far as the material predominates over the spiritual; and he is spiritual in so far as his spirit subdues the power of bodily influences. This process of spiritualization will become complete in the resurrection and glorification of the body, in the heavenly life.

This victory of the principle of life over all its initial and disciplinary conditions, must add inconceivably to the capacities and freedom of the entire renovated man. Compare the man who is wholly

earthly, sensual, and under the power of his body, with the man spiritual and heavenly only in that degree which is attainable by grace even in this life, and mark the difference ! But this is only as the dawn to the day, in comparison with what shall be when “the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth, and travaileth in pain together until now: and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”

That such a triumph of the principle of life over matter awaits the Spirit in its glorified body, is proclaimed by many an earnest prophecy in the material world around us. To afford such an advantage to us in a future life, there need only be an extension of what already exists, in a degree, in lower forms. We see something analogous to it in every specimen of organized matter. In all vegetable forms, matter is prevailingly under the power of life. In the animal still more so. How different is matter in living organizations from what it is in its unorganized state ! In living forms the laws of attraction, cohesion, gravitation, and all chemical laws, are overcome and brought into subserviency ; and the matter that enters into the organization in a measure disowns and ignores its former affinities, and yields itself freely to the laws of life ; so that the particles of matter, which before hung to the dull clod, now moves in the living system, and keep or change their position just as the law of life

directs. Now imagine an extension of this law to its perfection in higher forms, and what a glorious advantage does it promise to the heavenly body, in which its full perfection shall be realized! In this world the laws of life do not yet entirely master all other laws; for the matter which enters into a living organization still owns, to an extent, the laws which ruled it before. Hence the laws of matter still limit the laws of life, and are a check upon its freedom. Let this, however, be done away, and the laws of life gain entire mastery over the laws of matter, and space would become a congenial element to the body, as the solid earth is now its needed platform.

This is not yet the whole of life's prerogatives, as discoverable in this lower world. Not only are the natural laws of matter subject to the laws of life, but the inferior orders of organized life are even themselves subordinated to the higher. Vegetable and animal organizations are dissolved when needed for the use of the higher, rational organizations. Man is lord over all beneath him. He has power to dissolve all lower organizations, to destroy all the affinities of matter beneath him, and thus make them serve the purposes of the spirit. He dissolves chemical adherences; his own organism digests lower organisms; and the particles, refined and prepared in them, he assimilates to his own; and he sustains and perfects himself by their destruction. Thus the higher we ascend in the scale of life, the more clearly do we see that the higher order of life asserts its freedom, and reigns in glorious dominion over all beneath it, making it the platform and element of its own unfettered activities. Thus we

may expect that the glorified body will be the grand culmination toward which all nature is now pointing in the way of encouraging prophecy, or mystic adumbration.

We see, also, by the same mode of observation, that the same grade toward perfection is manifest in regard to the beauty of organized matter. In proportion as the perfect dominion of life over matter is realized in organized forms, in that proportion also are such forms beautiful. In the common mass of inorganic matter, there is mixture and confusion; but in the crystal there is beauty. In the flower, matter attains a delicacy and loveliness which is not to be seen in the same matter while it exists in the common soil—or even while it moves in the roots, stem, or leaves—or when it has again returned, by decomposition, to dust and ashes, its elemental state. So there is a still higher beauty and loveliness in the human face, in the glowing hue of the countenance, in the living light of the eye, which belong not to the matter of which these are composed, under any other affinities. Here matter is radiant with intelligence. The image of God, especially in the heavenly countenance of Christians, shines out through a material form

“Which cannot all express, yet cannot all conceal!”

If now we extend our thoughts in the direction pointed out to us by these analogies, they suggest to us the future bodies of the saints, material still, but refined, beautified, and lovely beyond all organizations which we now behold—the realization of all that is possible—the perfection of all that is here in part—the fulfilment of what all earthly forms prophesy of, reach after, but never attain.

SECTION III.

THE INCORRUPTIBILITY OF THE GLORIFIED BODY.

Was hier in Typen erscheint und verschwindet, soll dort in Stereotypen erscheinen und bestehen.

DR. LANGE.

IN a world where the laws of life reign triumphantly over the laws of lifeless nature, there can be neither death nor decay. What is it in this world that hurls all living organisms back to dust? Is it not that insatiableness which is manifested by the law of attraction and of gravitation, to draw every thing to itself? Almost as soon as a form begins to live, it is already assailed by laws of death, which prey upon it, and which gradually waste it away into its original elements. In Heaven, however, no such tendencies to decay exist, and the glorified body will be subjected to no wasting influences. "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption."

In many ways is our present body corruptible. The general cause of it is sin. Not only does sin, in the person himself, work itself out in wasting and deforming effects upon the body, but, such is the relation of parent to child, and of the individual to the race, that sin often works out its blemishes in its last results upon the body, even to many generations. As family likenesses are entailed, so are family sins, with their corrupting influences — a fearful consideration to such as suffer sin to reign in their mortal bodies! But the children of the resurrection are all born of Christ, a

holy seed; as He is, so are they — blooming in the vigor of immortality.

The body in this life is also hastened to dissolution by the severe usage which it often receives through labor under the curse. Toil bends, distorts, and benumbs it. Care wears and wastes it. Weariness takes away its elasticity. Often, too, avarice, and a too great haste to be rich, increase the abuse of the body. Its strength is intemperately used, and the over-taxed organism fags and fails under the cruel imposition, till it sinks to dust. In Heaven there is nothing of this. There they rest from their labors, at least in the sense of toil. The holy activities of glorified bodies are not such as induce weariness, but they are the free expressions of their own joyful life. To restrain these activities there, instead of being pleasant rest, would be painful toil; because life is only healthful and happy when it is free and active. What a joy it must be to exchange these vile, dull, and corruptible bodies, for such as are pure, active, and incorruptible! Who can conceive the advantage of bodies which are ever active, ever moved by the most delightful impulses of joy, and yet without waste or weariness?

In this life the body is corruptible through sickness. Legion is the name of those diseases which do their work in the body, to hurry mortals back to dust. Some wastings away are brought on by hereditary diseases; some by defects in the physical organization; some by exposure to extremes or changes of atmosphere; some by pestilential airs that creep gradually into the vitals, and do their work in secret;

some by wounds and bruises; some by raging fevers; and others again by the slow decay of one or other of the vital parts. Some, too, spread their gradual work of death over the whole period of life. Some belong peculiarly to one stage, and some to another. Some are peculiar to infancy, others to youth, and others still to manhood and old age, when life wastes down to the grave, as a flickering worn-out candle dies in the socket. O happy state, in which the body shall be forever free from all these sad effects of sin and mortality! There are, in the heavenly world, no causes, either internal or external, to produce such effects. “The inhabitants shall not say, I am sick.”

No chilling winds nor poisonous breath,
Can reach that happy shore:
Sickness and sorrow, pain and death,
Are felt and feared no more.

It shall be raised in incorruption! O glorious promise! O blessed hope! Death, with all its sad and painful preliminaries, shall be known no more. The glorified body shall stand forth in the glow and bloom of eternal youth. No pain—not even the fear of pain, shall ever afflict the saint. What a body is that which feels no weariness, and is subject to no decay! Elasticity in every limb, health on every cheek, and joy’s unclouded light in every eye. This is the inheritance of the glorified. Lift up your heads, O ye heirs of life eternal; for, behold, your redemption draweth nigh. “We shall all be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have

on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, “Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”

In that world of incorruptible forms nothing is old. No marks of decay, silently traced as by an unseen hand, shall ever appear as gloomy prophecies of death, upon the countenances of the glorified. Hail, blest land of eternal spring! Hail, happy realms of immortal youth!

We know that the bowers are green and fair
In the light of that summer shore,
And we know that the friends we have lost are there,
They are there—and they weep no more!

SECTION IV.

THE GLORY OF THE GLORIFIED BODY.

Arrayed in glorious grace,
Shall these vile bodies shine,
And every shape, and every face,
Look heavenly and divine.

“It is sown in dishonor.” Yes, truly, the body that goes down to the grave has been dishonored by sin and its consequences. Once it was a beautiful structure, the embodiment and reflection of the divine image, the home of intelligence and purity, a being of living gracefulness, loving and beloved. Now it has lost its health and immortality, and it moulders back

to dust. The mighty has fallen. The strong man has been bound by the last enemy, and has become a prey to the spoiler, till the time of redemption shall come.

“It is raised in glory.” Jesus “shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.” Such are promises which are spoken in reference to our bodies. With the word “glory,” and its derivative “glorious,” we generally associate the idea of a radiant brilliancy—a soft, beautiful light. The word in the original has, as its sense, the direct opposite of dishonor, yet it includes this brightness as one of the features of its honor. There is much in the general habit of Scripture to fix this meaning upon this word. On the word glory, in this connection, an old writer, Dr. Burnet, has well remarked: “The word denotes something more excellent than beauty only, or than proportion of parts, namely, a certain light or fulgency; nor can matter or body, be it ever so beautiful, appear *glorious*, unless it is illuminated with light and radiancy. Besides, the word *δόξα*, *glory*, wherever in the sacred writings it is used, either of natural bodies, or of divine or angelic appearances, almost always denotes something resplendent and illustrious. In this very chapter, (1 Cor. xv.,) mention is made of the glory of the stars, which consists in light, and that in order to explain to us the glory of our celestial bodies.”

Our future bodies are to be “fashioned like unto the Saviour’s *glorious* body.” There seems here to be an allusion to the manifestation on Tabor. There the Saviour appeared in the midst of a bright aureole of

heavenly magnificence. "His face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." The Saviour's body was the true Shekinah of the divine presence, which was always luminous. He dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory. On several occasions was brightness associated with his appearance after his glorification. Acts ix. 3. Rev. i. 14. The bright glory which thus blazed forth at intervals, both in the Old and New dispensations, will shine forth in Heaven always, as the central glory of that holy of holies. "The city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it." Like this glorious body of the Redeemer our future bodies are to be fashioned. Then shall be fulfilled the Saviour's promise: "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their father." "And they that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever." Thus there may be more than a figure in those passages which speak of "saints in light," and represent those who have attained to the resurrection as "clothed in white robes."

The Jews believed that the bodies of the saints in the heavenly world would be radiant with light. "When the soul is in Heaven," says Rabbi Levi, "it is clothed with celestial light; when it returns to the body, it shall have the same light; and then the body shall shine like the splendor of the firmament of Heaven."

It is worthy of remark, in this connection, that angels frequently appeared amid manifestations of glorious light. When the angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds to announce to them the joyful tidings of the Saviour's birth, "the glory of the Lord shone round about them." When the holy women came with spices early in the morning to the place where the Lord lay, "behold! two men stood by them in shining garments." In this respect, too, may we "be equal unto the angels, being the children of the resurrection."

If we take those passages which allude to the resurrection bodies of the saints as shining, in a figurative sense, then we must gather from them that the glorified body will perfectly reveal all the beauties and perfections of the souls which inhabit them, without hinderance or obscurity. In Heaven the spirit shines out through a body which its own glory makes transparent. The glorified body will be the complete outward manifestation of the glorified soul.

In this world the life of the soul is a hidden life, like the beauties of the flower in the bud. The weakness and grossness of the body still obscure the light and holiness of the renewed man. Salvation is only in part, as long as it groans, being burdened, waiting to be clothed upon with its house which is from Heaven. In Heaven that which is perfect will come. There life and grace will be externalized in all their beauty and bloom. What we here behold, of the beauty of holiness, dawn in the bright, tender, hopeful eyes of the saints, speak in their words, and live in their graces, will there come to a full outward per-

fection. In this world the fruits of the Spirit never become fully ripe. Influences of earth from without, and influences of remaining corruption from within, mar their beauty. But in the heavenly place, where that which is perfect is come, these fruits will outwardly appear in a bodily form. There love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, and meekness, will dawn out in every feature, and play like a soft heavenly light upon every sainted countenance. No workings of passion, no blush of shame, no sense of guilt, no marks of sin, no cloud of sorrow, no mournful, faded blossoms for the grave, will ever appear upon the happy countenances of the glorified.

The glorious resurrection body must also be free from all blemishes and deformities. It is certain that there is no where to be found, among Adam's sinful posterity, a perfect specimen of the original beauty and symmetry of the human body. Adam, after the fall, "begat a son in his own likeness, after his own image;" not after his perfect original image, but in the image of his fallen nature. Ever since, not only the human mind and heart, but also the human form, has been deformed by sin. It has been a common opinion, in all ages, that sin, which consists in the abuse of established laws, is the ultimate cause of deformity and debility. The physical and moral, constituting by their union but one life, exert a mutual influence on each other. Sin in the soul must, therefore, affect the body. It is evident also that some sinful tendencies are hereditary; and, with them, of course, also their corresponding physical defects. The glorious body will, however, be free from *all* the effects

of sin; and consequently also from all the blemishes and deformities of this body of sin and death.

In the Saviour there appeared a perfect specimen or model of a human body. He was begotten without sin, and no deformity could therefore appear in him. This was already typified of old by the lamb without blemish. He having been a perfect being, when he became incarnate in our nature, took a body of the most perfect symmetry and the most beautiful figure. If there had been one blemish in it, it would not have been a perfect incarnation in our nature. What is said of his loveliness must apply as well to his body as to his spirit. "Thou art fairer than the children of men." "He is altogether lovely." We may safely assume that the loveliness of his spotless spirit manifested itself in a beautiful exterior. His countenance was lofty and commanding, like Lebanon. His eyes were like dove eyes by the rivers of water, meek and tender. The intelligence of his mind shone from his face, till it was rendered almost transparent with life and love. The holiness of his heart ornamented every feature with unearthly beauty. Besides this, and more than all, was that indescribable harmony and unity of features which adds a new charm to each separate one, and sheds a richer glory over all. In this respect, too, shall our future bodies be "fashioned like unto the Saviour's glorious body."

It is raised in glory! Ours is a blessed hope. We look to the body going down to the tomb as we do to the seed that is cast into the earth, which we know is quickened if it die. We are not at a loss for comfort when the decay of death and the grave is before us.

“For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.” The tomb is the only soil on earth which yields fruit unto immortal life.

See darkness and doubt are now flying away ;
No longer I roam in conjecture forlorn :
So breaks on the traveller, faint, and estray,
The bright and the balmy effulgence of morn.
See truth, love, and mercy, in triumph descending,
And nature all glowing in Eden’s first bloom !
On the cold cheek of death smiles and roses are blending,
And beauty immortal awakes from the tomb !

SECTION V.

THE POWER OF THE GLORIFIED BODY.

O grave, where is thy victory ?

PAUL.

THE removal of sin and all its consequences from the body, will give it strength. Sin is itself weakness. Beings have strength only in harmony with God. Freedom from sin is freedom in full, and to be thus free is power. The consciousness of standing in a right relation to God, and in the light of his favor, gives confidence and strength.

“It is sown in weakness.” Sin, as it extends its influence through the body, enervates it. Corruptibility reigns in the body. It is invaded by disease

and weakness, until it is at length overpowered by its own misery, and crushed. It sinks down toward the tomb, with ever-increasing helplessness. Its glory lies at length prostrate in the dust.

“It is raised in power.” In its mortal state, it was under the power of matter; but in its immortal state, it will be powerful over matter. Health will triumph over disease. Bloom will smile over decay. Power will annihilate weakness. Life will reign over death.

Weakness is a disadvantage. It in various ways hems us in. It gives us a painful sense of limitation. Weakness is itself pain. It forces us often to stop short of our desires in gloomy disappointment. It limits the activities of the mind, and often drags them down from their aspirations. Life manages matter, even in its own organism, with labor. The spirit is often willing, when the flesh is weak. It is well denominated a body of death. In its bondage to weakness, it often sinks the spirit to a kind of half-life, as in sleep; causing it to measure drowsy hours, if not painfully, still in a dull negative state. Just the consciousness of power, even though we should never find it needful to use it, would greatly enlarge our sphere of life and joy. This full consciousness of free power will be ours, when what is sown in weakness shall be raised in power.

There is much to convince us that the power which belongs to our body potentially, is never fully realized in this world. There is in our very sense of limitation the prophecy of greater capacities, which now, for various reasons, lie dormant. “The muscular force is now felt to be—a power *restrained*; a faculty equal

to much more than is as yet permitted to it: and perhaps, with not a few individuals, the conscious mechanical energy is strictly analogous to that of a strong man fettered and hand-cuffed, who meditates what he will do when he is set at large. An habitual and unconscious discretion is, in truth, acquired early in life, which checks our muscular efforts, and leads us to refrain from the full exertion of the power we might exert, lest injury should be done. A man in full health is capable of far greater efforts than he ordinarily permits himself to make; and when this habitual restraint is thrown aside, as in cases of sudden peril, or of delirium and madness, the inherent mechanical force of mind is displayed, and it is seen that one lunatic or one desperate man exerts a power with which five or six in their ordinary senses can hardly cope.”* Thus we need not, in the case of the future body, seek for the endowment of a new power, but only a setting free, with an enlargement of the power which is now potentially in us, but which is limited by the weakness and corruptibility that now reign in and around us.

Our life, in the present body, has power over matter in various ways; all of which we may consider a sure prophecy of what shall be fulfilled by the extension of the same power. It can remove matter out of its place. It can mix and mingle matter; and, by the aid of chemical knowledge, even give to it a different consistency, appearance, and shape. It has the power mechanically to unite bodies to each other, so that they again are able, without its own immediate co-operation

* Physical Theory of Another Life, pp. 49, 53.

to change and move themselves and other bodies to its advantage. It has the power, to an extent, to restore bodies that have been dilapidated, both organic and inorganic. We may, of course, expect that in all these particulars, and perhaps in other ways that now we know not of, this power over matter will be increased. The connection of the glorified being with matter, will be of such a kind as will make man still more completely lord over it. So that, instead of being cramped and limited by nature, he will be able, with ease and pleasure, to make it subserve his own will. What a state of happy freedom will that be where spirit will have full power over matter; where it shall no more be the limitation of his being, but its element; and where it shall no more be needed as a rough covering against an ungenial outward world, but the passive means of an unlimited range of spiritual delights!

Power implies activity—quickness of motion. The idea that the saints in their glorified bodies may have the power of transporting themselves at will, and almost instantaneously, from place to place, has been often suggested. In that case the glorified body would be but as the incarnation of thought, reaching a distant point as quick as will. This may not be accomplished independently of the use of natural laws as means, but rather in the use of them, by virtue of a more perfect power over matter and all its known and unknown laws.

Angels have evidently this power of locomotion far beyond anything that we can now clearly conceive. The angel Gabriel, who was sent to bring an answer to the prayer of Daniel, "being caused to fly swiftly,"

reached him before his short prayer was ended. Dan. ix. 21. The bodies of Elijah, and that of our Saviour, were freed from the power of gravitation, endowed with the power of ascending on high, and of traversing space. Why should not our bodies have the same capacity, when once what is sown in weakness shall be raised in power? Then it may be literally fulfilled in the case of the saints, "They shall mount up with wings as eagles." The glorified saints, in order to exercise this prerogative, need only to be "equal unto the angels;" for they not only hover around the throne, and range the heavenly realms, but soar to distant worlds on excursions of joy, or on quick errands of mercy and love. O my soul, rejoice, and be exceedingly glad, in the prospect of the glorious destiny which awaits thee, when that which is perfect is come!

SECTION VI.

THE SPIRITUALITY OF THE GLORIFIED BODY.

Ay, there will be then one soul of joy in us and in God. We in Him, He will be in us. We shall be nerves in his infinite blessedness, and forever be thrilled with delight. And perhaps what is done divinely on one side of Heaven, will gladden us on the other. Ay, this—*this* is the thing to think of.

EUTHANASY.

IT is sown a natural body. The word, natural body, is to be taken as the same with animal body. The animal body is one in which the earthly elements preponderate and rule. This is the reason why it must

return to dust, which is the ultimate state toward which it now prevailingly tends. By the fall, man became the slave of the natural. "The creature was made subject to vanity" through sin, by which the Spirit lost its proper lordship and dominion. As sin brought death, it brought with it also that associated weakness and decay of the physical organism which cause the body to be sown a natural body, that it may decay like the seed in the earth, and thus become the womb of that which is better.

Like a seed. Yes; for it is the germ of the body that shall be. "It is raised a spiritual body."

Spiritual body cannot mean a body of pure spirit. This would be no body at all, and consequently a contradiction in terms. Besides, in that case it would not be proper to speak, as the Scriptures do, of the resurrection, changing, and glorification of the body. It evidently means to represent that the resurrection body is material still; the adjective "spiritual" designates only one of its attributes.

We say, therefore, first, that the words "spiritual body" designates a body merging towards the properties of spirit. Matter, even in this world, exists in various degrees of refinement. "All flesh is not the same flesh." Beyond doubt, in the heavenly world, matter exists with a delicacy of combination that is entirely unknown on earth. We know, by aid of science, that some of the heavenly bodies within reach of astronomical observation, are much more refined in the texture of their matter than others. The Apostle alludes to this fact in direct connection with the resurrection, and by way of answering the question in

reference to the dead, "With what body do they come?" He says, "There are celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

According to this representation, our future bodies will be constituted of matter having the same quality and consistence as that which exists in the heavenly regions. This is no doubt alluded to by the Apostle when he designates our future body as "our house which is from heaven." 2 Cor. v. 2. So also, in another place, we are assured that while our present animal body is from the earth, and in the likeness of the first Adam, our future body shall be in the likeness of the second Adam, who is Lord from Heaven—who, though he was born from the virgin, was nevertheless without sin, and consequently possessed of a body un-fallen in its nature. "As is the earthly, such are they also that are earthly: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." 1 Cor. xv. 48, 49.

As that heavenly world, after the quality of whose matter our glorified bodies are to be formed, is emphatically the world of spirits, the spiritual body must

be entirely under the power of spirit. "There is," says Dr. Whitby, "an animal body, that is, a body fitted for this low sensible state in which we are at present; and there is a spiritual body, that is, a body fitted for our spiritual and celestial state. In this state we are forced to serve our bodies, and to attend their leisure, and mightily to depend upon them in the operations of the mind; in the other, our bodies shall wholly serve our spirits, and minister to them, and depend upon them, and therefore may be styled spiritual."

That our spiritual bodies are bodies entirely under the power of the spirit seems to be implied in that saying of the Apostle, that our bodies shall be like to the last Adam, who "was made a quickening spirit." It is well said by Dr. Burnett, "The gross, heavy, sluggish bodies, such as we have at present, are in the lowest class of bodies, which immortal minds and rational natures inhabit. Those which consist of a light, subtle, and movable matter, are a much nobler sort of animated bodies, and are readier for motion or dispatch in all the actions, either of the mind or the body. Nay, even in this terrestrial body, the thin, the subtle, and the fluid part, which we call spirit, is the proper vehicle of the soul, as the most nearly allied to it. These it commands, and these are the instruments which it makes use of to move the members of the body: and the affections and operations of the mind depend upon the subtilty or the grossness, the plenty or the want, the regular or irregular motion of the spirits, and are accordingly the more or less powerful and vigorous."

Why should not matter in the spiritual body become wholly subject to the will of the spirit? Is it not already so in part in this life? The mind is, in a degree, master of matter. All motion which we behold is an evidence of this. It is an ancient opinion that all motion is the product of mind, either of the Creator or of creatures; and though second causes may lie between the moving will and the motion, yet ultimately the moving cause is mind. "Mind," says Taylor, "incorporate, unconsciously indeed, but as directed by the creative energy, combines or dissolves, takes up or rejects, the elements with which it comes in contact, and thus lives, if we may so speak, by its own discrete act." What can hinder us from believing that this power of spirit, or will, over matter, which manifests its own masterly existence so plainly in the imperfect body here, should assert its prerogatives in perfection and glory in the perfected bodies of the children of the resurrection?

It seems extravagant, and entirely unnecessary to contend, as some have done, that the general organism of the present body will not reappear in the future body. What should hinder its becoming spiritual in the highest sense, even in its present physical order? What should hinder spiritual powers from sustaining and animating what is now replenished and sustained by earthly elements? Besides, it is difficult to see how the identity of the body could be sustained in the abolition of its present order of organization. The organs of the present body can remain without their infirmities. The present physical structure may, by virtue of its glorification, be strong and beauteous in

the fadeless vigor of eternal youth. Thus the future body will be the fulfilment of this. The animal will become spiritual. The natural will be glorified. What now nature sustains will then be sustained by spirit. What now depends upon nature will then depend upon spirit. What is now organ and instrument of nature will then be organ and instrument of spirit.

Farther, the spiritual body is one in which dwells, in a plenary way, the power of the Holy Spirit. Such was the opinion of the fathers, as appears from quotations found in various commentaries. The spiritual body, say they, "is a body possessed and actuated by the Holy Spirit, as the natural body is by the animal and vital spirits." Tertullian says, "It is called spiritual as putting on the spirit." "It is spiritual," says Methodius, "as receiving the whole energy and communion of the Spirit;" and again, "He calls that a spiritual body which is wholly subject to the Spirit."

Augustine, as quoted by Ursinus, says, "We must not imagine that because the Apostle says that the body which we have in the resurrection will be spiritual, that it will be purely spiritual without any body. But he calls that a spiritual body, which is wholly subject to the Spirit, and which is free from corruption and death. For when he calls the body which we now have a natural body, we must not suppose that it is not a body, but a soul. Therefore as the body which we now have is called natural, because it is subject to the soul, and cannot be spiritual, because it is not yet fully subject to the Spirit, as long as it may be corrupted, so it will then be called

spiritual, when it will not be able with any corruption to resist the Spirit."

There is much manifest to enable us to know that the influence of the Holy Spirit, even in this life, exerts a refining and ennobling influence upon the under texture, or tissue-work, of the bodily organization. In the eye, the countenance, and in every feature, as well as in all the graces of conduct, the fruits of the Spirit are incarnated. "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" Even now we walk in the Spirit. Even now already "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made us free from the law of sin and death." Even now "to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

Thus already in this life, the Spirit, dwelling in the saints, banishes more and more the life of nature. In Heaven this victory will be complete. There the Holy Spirit, who dwells in the bodies of the saints as a quickening power, will so permeate the matter of the new body, as to quicken it with His own life, and render it radiant with His own glory. "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Rom. viii. 10, 11.

Who can measure the happy advantages which will flow to the saints in light by means of their glorified bodies? Truly it doth not yet appear what we shall

be! We wait for that which shall be revealed; and, while we wait, we rejoice in hope of the blessedness that awaits us.

O glorious hour! O blest abode!
I shall be near and like my God!
And flesh and sin no more control
The sacred pleasures of the soul.

CHAPTER X.

The Spirits of the Saints glorified.

Now we see through a glass darkly ; but then face to face : now I know in part ; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

PAUL.

Ye are come unto mount Zion—and to the spirits of just men made perfect.

EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

WE are rising still higher in our meditations on the happiness of the saints in their Heavenly Home. Having treated of the heavenly place, and of the glorified bodies of the saints in that place, we must now proceed to speak of the glorification of the spirit. Here is a still higher point in the blessed argument. It is the spirit that poised in bliss, between the highest form of matter, as it exists in the glorified body, and the great God, the Father of Spirits, and the source of all their blessedness. Hence we ascend higher, in

our conceptions of heavenly blessedness, when we contemplate "the spirits of just men made perfect."

The spirit, as well as the body, has been injured by sin. Darkness, weakness, and confusion have taken the place of that light, vigor, and harmony which reigned in our unfallen nature. This ruin, which sin has wrought, needs to be repaired. It is plain, however, that this is not fully accomplished in this life. Grace lays the foundation, renovates the fallen nature, and carries on the work of sanctification, and, in a sense, finishes the work of salvation; yet still glorification lies beyond, and "it doth not yet appear what we shall be." The spirit of life in Christ Jesus only triumphs fully and finally in the resurrection of the body, and the full glorification of the spirit in the higher world. The marks of the face are found as a blemish upon the spirit, as long as it is united to the body of death. The influences of an imperfect body hem and hinder the perfection of the spirit. We can only expect fully glorified souls in connection with fully glorified bodies, in the Heavenly Home.

The complete glorification of the spirit involves three things; of them we shall treat in this Chapter. First, the perfection of the senses. Secondly, the perfection of the mental powers. Thirdly, the perfection of the moral nature.

SECTION I.

THE GLORIFICATION OF THE SENSES.

Vereicht empfangen wir, bei trüber Dämmrung Klarheit,
Nur durch fünf Oefnungen den schwachen Stral der Wahrheit;
Da IHR ber vollem Tag das heitere Gemüth
Durch tausend Pforten füllt, und an Euch alles sieht:
Das, wie das licht für uns ein Nichts wär ohne Augen,
Ihr tausend Wesen kannt, die wir zu schn nicht taugen.

HALLER.

THE senses are of a mixed nature, lying between the body and soul—between the outer world of matter, and the inner world of spirit. They are not physical wholly, nor are they mental wholly, but are the transition media between the body and the spirit, and belong equally to both. The sensation we may call physical, but the perception which it induces is mental. Through the senses, we may say, mind is associated with matter: here both meet and exchange their sympathies. “It is upon the retina, and there only, that the mind converses with light and colors—it is with the tympanum, and there only, that the mind converses with the modulated vibrations of the air—it is upon the tongue that it discriminates certain chemical differences.”

The senses have a like connection with our moral nature through our imaginative faculties. It is well known how music, the beauties of nature, and sweet odors, affect the highest and purest emotions of our nature. It is on this ground that religion has ever—and by divine direction too, as in the Jewish economy

and worship — sought to sanctify the fine arts, and to draw them into its own holy service. Thus we perceive that the perfection of the senses must be intimately connected with the perfection of both our mental and moral natures.

After these observations in regard to the connection between the senses and our mental and moral nature, it is scarcely necessary to offer any farther proof that the senses will continue to hold their place in the glorified body. Heaven being a material world, and the resurrection body retaining its materiality, the senses must, of course, continue in another life. It is difficult to see how they could be dispensed with, since the activities of the higher faculties depend upon them, as indispensable conditions. The spirit is dependent upon the senses pretty much as the tree or plant is upon its roots. The senses are the adits of knowledge, as well as the avenues by which innumerable exquisite sensations, perceptions, and emotions are produced in the spirit.

Saurin thinks that even “God is happy in certain *sentiments*, which may probably bear some analogy to what we call in ourselves sensations.” Whether this can be predicated of the Father, “who is a Spirit,” having no necessary connection with matter—which did not exist until it was created by Him—we perhaps cannot know; but that it is true of the Incarnate God, who remains forever associated with our nature in His glorified body, no one can doubt. He is still *touched* with a *feeling* of our infirmities, sympathizing with us in all the varied experiences of our probation. Well does Saurin say, in connection with the above, “Sen-

sations, lively, affecting, and delicious, we know, contribute to our present felicity. They who have affected to refine and spiritualize our ideas of felicity, and to free them from every thing sensitive, I think, have mistaken the nature of spirit. God will impart to beatified souls all the sentiments of which they are capable. He will make them feel something more harmonious than the best compositions of music; something more delicious than the most exquisite tastes: and so of the rest."

The refinement of matter in our glorified bodies must necessarily bring with it vastly refined senses. The rough exterior of our present bodies limits the powers of the senses. We know, too, that the senses, even in this life, are capable of great improvement, as we shall presently see. It is perfectly legitimate and proper to believe, that the susceptibility of improvement which now characterizes the senses, is a prophecy of what is yet to come, and that they will reach their highest possible perfection through the material refinements of the glorified body. The most vivid imagination cannot portray the infinity of ways in which such perfected senses would affect the happiness of the saints in light!

This is an inquiry worth pursuing more particularly, and into greater detail. Let us see what we can find in our senses, as we know them, that adumbrates their future enlargement and refinement; and how, so far as we can at present see, such improvement will increase the happiness of the saints.

Let us begin with the eye. This is the most prominent and excellent of all the senses. It opens up the

widest range to our perceptions, and makes the clearest and most direct impressions upon our minds. There is in us an universal and instinctive desire to see things. Both irrational and rational creatures always turn their eyes in the direction in which their attention is called by either of the other senses. Though objects may have been described to us, we still feel as if we had no correct and satisfactory idea of them until we have seen them. So deeply is this feeling rooted in our nature, that men in all ages have felt the force of it, even in their devotions. All pagans, in their worship, turn their eyes towards their holy places. The Mahomedan prays not except with his eyes towards Mecca. The Jews prayed with their faces toward the tabernacle ; and when they worshipped in the Temple, they turned their eyes in anxious expectation, and in rapt devotion, towards the Holiest Place. It is natural, even among Christians, to turn their eyes heavenward during worship. "In the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up." Ps. v. 3. Ps. cxxi. 1. This may serve to illustrate how much and how deeply our minds depend upon this sense in all their activities, and how intimately it is related to our moral nature — it must, therefore, be a vital means of happiness, and its enlargement and refinement must vastly enlarge and refine our happiness in the life which awaits us.

The present capacity of the human eye is beyond all conception great. The imagination is overwhelmed and falls from its soaring height to the earth, in its attempts to take in the range of our vision. It has been computed that the nearest of the fixed stars is

distant from the eye which sees it 19,200,000,000,000 of miles ; and that the most remote of those stars, that is still distinctly visible to us, is remote perhaps twice that distance ! To aid us in forming some idea of the immense distance to which the eye can reach, we may remark, that there are stars visible to us, by the aid of the telescope, which are so distant from us that it takes light, which travels at the rate of 200,000 miles in a single second, four thousand years to reach us ! Then, too, it is not only one star which we see, but the eye takes in the circle of a whole hemisphere of the heavens, with its innumerable stars and star-clusters, with their immense sizes, and their immeasurable distances from each other ! All this vast universe of shining worlds are taken in at one glance, and pictured upon the retina of the eye, in perfect images, in a space not larger than the diamond that glistens on a lady's ring !

Such a glance at the heavens is, of course, very general, obscure, and indistinct ; but what should hinder the enlargement of the visive powers so as to take in particulars — so as to see distinctly small objects on all these worlds ? We attain to such power, in a great degree, even in this life, by means of telescopes. If we can thus enlarge our visive powers temporarily, cannot God do the same permanently ? If we can do it by polishing and refining glass, cannot he do it by refined and glorious bodies ? If we have such a strong desire to do it, will not that desire be satisfied ?

We may, we think, safely consider the very disposition we have to increase our visive powers by means of optical instruments, as not only an evidence of our

great desire for enlargement, but also as an evidence of our capacity for it, and, at the same time, as a true prophecy of what shall be. We are in this life under a painful sense of limitation. Those who live among clods, and are content, on account of brutish natures, so to live, may not feel it; but earnest spirits do. Such stand upon the narrow borders of the seen and the known, and peer, with many a sigh, into the unexplored infinite which stretches out before them.

Ach, aus dieses Thales Gründen,
 Die der Kalte Nebel drückt,
 Könnt ich doch den Ausgang finden,
 Ach, wie fühlt ich mich beglückt!
 Dort erblick' ich schöne Hügel,
 Ewig yung und ewig grün!
 Hätt' ich Schwingen, hätt' ich Flügel,
 Nach den Hügeln zög' ich hin.

SCHILLER.

Such are the irrepressible longings of earnest minds. We have the same reason for believing that such longing will be satisfied, as the naturalist has when he finds under the rough shell of worms the incipient formation of wings, for believing that the insect will, at some future time, soar in the air.

Thus we see the strongest reasons for believing that the saints in their glorified bodies may have the power of descrying realms afar — their beings, and their scenery. Varieties of the works of divine wisdom and love may appear, unknown and unimagined before. The powers of sight may be so increased as that almost the whole universe may lie as an open page to view, upon which the sainted may examine one by one

the wonders of creative power, and the endless varieties of divine love! We may imagine the saints, in their "celestial pastimes," as the poet says, directing each other's attention into boundless distance, where their holy curiosity has descried objects of new interest, and addressing to each other the inquiry which the Elder did to John, "What are these?" Who will say that the happiness which an intelligent spirit, one who delights in God and his works, would derive from such a source, would not beseem the dignity of the spirits of just men made perfect?

Moreover, the eye may be capable of regulating itself for any distance, at pleasure. It has that capacity, to a degree, even in this life. By "straining the eye," as it is commonly called, we can soon see distant objects distinctly, which we first saw but dimly and confusedly. When we pass from a light to a somewhat dark room, our sight is at first imperfect, but the eye gradually adapts itself to the quantity of light, by enlarging the pupil, and thus what was at first indistinct is soon clearly seen. This capacity which we discover in ourselves, to some extent, is possessed by some of the irrational creation in an astonishing degree, as if the kind Creator would make up to them in the senses for their lack of intelligence. "The hen can use her eye as microscope and telescope at the same time. She sees, with the same ease, the small seed at her feet, and the murderous hawk at a distance, when he appears to our eyes as but a small dark speck." This is done by the power which she possesses of quickly accommodating the eye to the nearest and farthest distances. It is certainly not going beyond modest

bounds if we suggest, that a faculty which we see so abundantly capable of enlargement in this world, and which brings with it also so many marked advantages, may belong, in a still higher degree of perfection, to the condition of the glorified body.

It has been suggested, that the instance of Stephen, the first Christian martyr, who when "he looked up steadfastly into heaven, saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God," furnishes an illustration of the increased power of sight to which we have alluded. It may be that his spirit, just about being set free from the body, thus furnishes an example of its capacities in this particular; and that, though the power of sight was previously hidden by the rough limitations of the earthly body, the spirit may be able to exercise such visive power both in its disembodied state, and again in the finer media which the glorified body will furnish. Perhaps, from this point of view, we may be justified in assigning to the dying visions of saints a deeper significance than we commonly feel willing to do.

What we have said of the power which the human eye has of accommodating itself to any distance, leads us to remark farther, that the organs of sight in the glorified body may be perfected, not only in the direction of the telescope, but also in the direction of the microscope. For in this direction, too, there is evidently a capacity for improvement. This would open up a new field of interesting discoveries, equally astonishing and delightful, since God's works reveal as great wonders in little as in great things. This thought will easily be expanded by the reader's own reflections.

We see things through media ; but only some media admit of seeing objects through them, and of these some are better and others less adapted—as air, water, glass, crystals, and such like. May not the future world furnish yet other media ; or, may not the powers of the future eye enable us to see through other media which are now opaque and impenetrable to our vision ? The enjoyment of this great prerogative will not depend entirely upon any change effected in the eye itself : it may be brought about also in part by a difference of atmosphere—or whatever the element may be in which the glorified breathe—and the medium through which they see. That is emphatically the world of light!—and may it not be, that in yonder blessed realm, where “there is no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it,” the light may be so powerful and perfect as to render all glorified forms transparent ! When we call to mind how the reflection of light through a prism adorns every object with the most glorious hues, no imagination can conceive what the laws of light in the realms above may render possible !

May we entertain the idea of glorified forms and organisms being transparent before celestial eyes ? What a world of wonders would this reveal ! To see the hidden movings of life in a single plant, flower, or animated being, would surpass in wonder anything that mortal eyes have ever seen, or that human imagination has ever conceived. “While, in the terrestrial sphere in which we move,” says Dr. Dick, “our views are limited to the *external* aspects of plants and animals, organized beings, in other spheres, may have the

faculty of penetrating into their *internal*, and to us, invisible movements—of tracing an animal from its embryo state, through all its gradations and evolutions, till it arrive at maturity—of perceiving at a glance, and, as it were, through a transparent medium, the interior structure of an animal, the complicated movements of its curious machinery, the minute and diversified ramifications of its vessels, and the mode in which its several functions are performed—of discerning the fine and delicate machinery which enters into the construction, and produces the various motions of a microscopic animalcule, and the curious vessels, and the circulation of juices, which exist in the body of a plant—of tracing the secret processes which are going on in the mineral kingdom, and the operation of chemical affinities among the minute particles of matter, which produce the diversified phenomena of the universe.” All this is attainable without the creation of anything new in our nature; all it requires is the perfection of what we now possess ‘in part.’

Then, too, let it be once more remarked, we have the best reason for supposing that all objects will be infinitely more delicate and beautiful to glorified eyes in that world of light. There, no gloom from a sad heart throws its shadows over the landscape. No storms nor mists darken the heaven of the blest. No summer heat, nor autumn frosts, blight the fair face of celestial nature!

We know, too, that the refining influences of grace in the heart, even in this life, affect the pleasures of sight. Sinners are blind. Their understandings, and so also their eyes, are darkened. They see not God’s

love in the world around them. Nature is not so beautiful to a sinner as it is to a saint. Flowers have not to him such heavenly tints, nor do stars so sweetly shine. Thus, things which are hidden from the wise and prudent, are revealed unto babes! Beautifully has the poet said, on this point,

Acquaint thyself with God, if thou wouldest taste
His works. Admitted once to His embrace,
Thou shalt perceive that thou wast blind before:
Thine eye shall be instructed; and thine heart,
Made pure, shall relish with divine delight,
Till then unfelt, what hands divine have wrought.

COWPER.

What must the scenery of the heavenly world be, when mirrored in glorified eyes, and in a pure heart! It is a beautiful thought, expressed by Dante, that, as spirit is superior to matter, its own creative vigor will glorify all heavenly forms, and render them glorious as itself. Speaking of Beatrice entering into Paradise, he says:

Then I beheld
The dame, so joyous enter, that the orb
Grew brighter at her smiles; and, if the stars
Were moved to gladness, what then was my cheer,
Whom Nature hath made apt for every change!

But setting aside poetry, is it not a scripture representation, that creating “Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy,” is the same as creating “new heavens and a new earth.” Isaiah lxv. 17, 18. The same idea is alluded to in the New Testament, where this promise in Isaiah is referred to. 2 Peter iii. 13. Now, if the holiness and glory which shall reign in the

future Church, even upon earth, shall seem to transform the earth and the heavens into its own type, how much more may we look for a fulfilment of this promise in that bright world, “wherein dwelleth righteousness !”

If we suppose in the heavenly world a change, such as we have now suggested, or similar to it, in the medium of sight; or if we build upon what we know will be, namely, a refinement of the matter composing a glorified body, then we may also, on the same ground, predicate a similar enlargement and refinement in the sense of HEARING. In their relation to matter, as the medium of their activities, both these senses stand on the same ground ; and what is true in this respect of the one, is true also of the other.

Though, as we have already remarked, the eye is in many respects the most excellent of the senses, yet, in several particulars, the ear has also its peculiar advantages. We can, for instance, often hear where we cannot see ; and while we can see but in one direction at once, we can hear from all sides at the same time. Thus the ear aids the eye, and, in its own particular direction, enlarges the sphere and range of the senses ; in this way, as well as in its own sphere, it opens more widely the circle of our happiness.

The sense of hearing has most bearing on our intellectual and moral nature, particularly through the medium of our emotional nature ; and in this way it becomes the occasion of the highest and purest joy. Sounds have as powerful an influence to move the spirit, as sights. What a world of exquisite power there is in music ! How is the heart touched by the hum of insects in a summer evening ; how moving is

the soft sound of the cascade, the lowing of kine, the cooing of the dove, the deep cadence that comes up from the forest, the roar of ocean, the rolling of distant waters, the sighing of the summer breeze, the moan of winter storms, the peaceful song of the ploughboy, the mellow tones of the flute in the twilight of the evening, the deep, sacred sound of the organ, and the united voices of the great congregation ! What an almost endless variety of moral impressions are thus made upon the spirit, through the sense of hearing ! If the soul be rightly tuned, what a world of happiness is opened to it, through the avenue of sweet sounds ! The Scriptures frequently refer to the sense of hearing in connection with our future happiness, and allude to music as forming a prominent and delightful part of the joy and worship there, as it does here on earth.

We have reason to hope much in the way of happiness in heaven, from the glorification of this sense. We know that the ear is capable of vast improvement. How easily does a blind man, because he has no other mode of recognizing a friend, know him by the tones of his voice ! So the Indian, by lying with his ear on the ground, hears the tramp of horses afar off, while an unpractised ear would not be able to hear anything at all. The practised musician, with painful accuracy, distinguishes the smallest discords, and feels the most delicate shades of melody, where an ordinary person would neither be distressed with the one, nor delighted with the other. We are all conscious of the power of plying our hearing faculties with additional intensity, when it is needed to be done in some special emergency. We are conscious, too, of a sense of limitation — we

feel that our hearing is a power confined ; and that all which is possible in this respect has never yet been actualized. The power of hearing can also be much improved by artificial means. The air, too, has much to do with the perfection of this sense ; and we know that even a slight change of air vastly increases the effect of sound, and in a corresponding way also the sense of hearing. Thus we see that nothing is required but an enlargement of what is already at hand, to produce the most wonderful improvement in the capabilities of the ear ; and it is easy to believe that all this is effected by glorified elements, and a glorified body. When, in this respect, that which is perfect is come, what should hinder the saints in light from hearing the songs of distant worlds, and even to converse with their inhabitants, as children do with each other in the same family !

The angels, whose bodies are no doubt composed of the finest material—some have supposed of light—have perhaps now a far higher capacity in this respect than anything we can imagine. Klopstock, in his Messiah, has, very beautifully, assigned such transcendent power to the Angel Gabriel.

Und mit dem Ohre, mit dem er,
Tausendmal tausend Meilen entfernt, den Ewigen wandeln
Hört, und am Himmel herunter, die Orionen im Jubel :
Hört er das langsam wallende Blut des betenden Mittlers
Bang von Ader zu Ader fliessen. Viel lanter vernahm er
In den Tiefen des Göttlichen Hertzens betende Seufzer.

There is nothing impossible in this, should we take this language as the tamest prose. There is nothing extravagant in the idea that such a prerogative awaits us.

"Who will doubt," says Dr. Hitchcock, "that when our present gross bodies shall be laid aside, the soul, looking from a spiritual body, with quickened powers and unobstructed vision, shall penetrate a new world in the infinitesimal parts of creation? What absurdity in the supposition that, even now, there are finite minds in the universe who possess this quickened power of perception, and, though in distant worlds, do actually know what is passing here by the vibrations which our words and actions produce upon elastic matter!"

If we keep in mind what the Apostle says in reference to our vile body being changed and fashioned like unto the Saviour's glorious body, and that, consequently, our glorified senses shall be similar to His, there is not only something wonderfully beautiful, but also exceedingly touching, in the following extract from a German writer, Lavater. "I do not seek to prove it, but I nevertheless say it with the firmest conviction of heart that it is true, that Jesus, our Saviour, the glorified Son of Man, does, by the power of his hearing organs, at the same time distinctly hear all tones which resound through Creation, however infinite in number and confused in order they may seem to us; and that he distinguishes them from each other, so as to hear each one as plainly as if he had only a single one to hear. Certainly, and without doubt, he understands, by means of his bodily ears,—for of his spiritual perceptions and omniscience we do not hear speak—at once, and with perfect distinctness, all the songs and adorations of Seraphim, and of the inhabitants of all worlds—he hears all prayers and sighs, and complaints of all men, yes, even the cry of ravens; and these all

he hears just as if each one spake directly to his ear. Heart-inspiring — or shall I say, heart-oppressing — thought! Jesus hears, by means of his bodily ears, all that I have ever prayed, or ever said, just as if I had spoken it alone into his ear! There lies, between his ears and my tongue, a medium of sound, which penetrates and fills air and all else, binds together all worlds and all beings, and this medium bears my words, in a way quite natural and direct, to his ears!"

As our visive and auditory organs are media of communication between the inner world of Spirit and the outer world of matter, and thus serve as means of a correct knowledge of what exists around us, as well as a source of much pleasure, so is also the sense of smell. This sense is active through the organ which converses with odors.

All bodies, animate and inanimate, constantly emit certain subtle effluvia or odors. These are borne by the air to the very delicate inner surface of the organ of smell, and the soul is impressed by them. These odorous emissions are of course material, though wonderfully refined; and in smell there is, therefore, a meeting of Spirit and Matter. Matter and Spirit mutually impress each other.

In regard to the capacity of this sense for enlargement and refinement, the same in substance might be said, as has been said of the senses of hearing and seeing. It is not necessary here to repeat those considerations.

Let us look for a moment at the connection in which this sense stands to our happiness. We know that odors affect the mind and heart; some agreeably and

some disagreeably. Thoughts and feelings are waked up by them. They excite especially, and peculiarly, the imagination and the emotions. Who does not know how odors link themselves with our memories, hang around our associations, and, while they make the present agreeable, call up the tenderest and loveliest recollections of the past! No doubt the savor of those "spices and ointments," with which the Jews embalmed their beloved dead, was designed, among other things, to associate itself with their pleasant and affectionate remembrance of them. This same perfume should still waken up in their hearts the image of their friends after they had passed beyond their sight! So does the odor of a flower in the garden, the scent of a vase, or the perfume of a drawer that is but seldom opened, fill the heart with the most vivid recollections of times, persons, and things which are all gone from our sight, like last year's flowers!

Thus we see how intimately the activities of this sense are associated with the higher affections of the spirit. We may go farther, and say that this sense has an intimate connection with our highest, our moral nature. Allusions are made to this sense to illustrate even divine affections. The sacrifices of God's people are said to be "a sweet smelling savor to Him." The Saviour's name is said to be "like ointment poured forth;" and the saints are said to be "unto God a sweet savor of Christ." This language is of course figurative; but we see how prominent a source of happy affections this sense opens, being referred to to illustrate the feelings of delight which are experienced in the Divine heart when his saints offer unto him an acceptable sac-

rifice; and being made the type of that influence of grace which flows from Christ's person to all his children.

Lavater has beautifully said, "Odor is perhaps the language of plants and flowers!" He takes the thought from Weiland, who, in his "Letters from the Dead to the Friends they have left behind," suggests that in the heavenly world, rational and moral communion may possibly be held between its different orders, through the medium of odors, by means of which they may sweetly impress and affect each other's minds and hearts. We translate the lines of Weiland, as well as we can, thus:

"The spiritual bodies
Are tissued and woven of tender and sensitive nerves.
Instead of speaking in tones, the saints breathe forth their
thoughts,
In delicate and unchangeable odors, to their loving mates in the
skies.
Nor feel they alone ; out of their ecstatic feelings of blessedness
Bloom forth the happiest thoughts, which e'er, like perfume of
flowers,
Up to the loved and the loving Creator, devoutly arise!"

Suppose this is poetry! There is, nevertheless, a sense in which we may say that flowers speak to our hearts, even in this world. Odors do communicate feelings and thoughts. Why should not this be done in Heaven! Experience proves that sweet perfume has a tendency to inspire the most agreeable feelings and emotions; and that it does wonderfully elevate our souls to joy and love. For this odors were employed in the Jewish worship; and hence also we meet such frequent allusions in the sacred writings to perfume,

odors, and savor, in connection with religious feelings and affections. With reference to the same idea does John, when describing the heavenly worship, speak of the elders falling down before the Lamb, having “golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of the saints.”

Who has not felt deep and mysterious movings to prayer amid the perfumes of a flower garden, or the many mingling odors of a grove,

When gentle gales,
Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Those balmy spoils.

May there not be, in the heavenly, like in the earthly Paradise, as monitors and helps to worship,

Flowers of all hue, and without thorn, the rose ?

Why may not the glorified spirit, incarnate still in glorified matter, be inspirited to higher ecstacies of bliss by the odorous exhalations of glorified forms ? There the saints will still be the priests of all nature. As such they will stand before God to worship ; and through their senses, as living altars, will the outer world bring its offerings to God. There it may be truly said of the Church in His presence, ‘much better is the smell of thine ointments than all spices ; and the perfume of thy garments is as the smell of Lebanon.’

In regard to the two remaining senses known to us in this life, namely, taste and touch; they approach, in the mode of their activities, the sense of smell. The contact of spirit with matter, through taste and touch,

is in one sense more immediate than is the case in smell; and yet the contact is scarcely so delicate and refined. Touch makes us acquainted with the outward consistency of matter, while taste discovers to us more of its inward or hidden chemical qualities. Both do much enlarge the sphere of our knowledge of, and communion with, the material world. Both are capable of high refinement, and of great enlargement. Both are and may be sources of much happiness. We can easily conceive of their glorification with the other senses; and it would be easy to show that they may be the means of happiness not unworthy of the spirits of the just made perfect.

To enlarge on these points would only be to repeat, in a slightly varied form, what has been already said in connection with the other senses. We leave the expansion of these thoughts to the meditations of the earnest and humble reader, while we pass on to some farther suggestions on this interesting subject.

Are we not, after having exercised our perception to the uttermost, by means of all our present senses, still conscious of something like half-perceptions, that seem darkly to dawn up in the spirit? Is there not manifest, especially in the Christian's soul, the consciousness of half-hidden senses? Is there not, after we have done the best, an oppressive sense of limitation, beneath which labors the presentiment that there lives, beyond the twilight before us, a world of wider range, into the freedom of which we long to emerge? May not this be the dawn of yet other senses?

It is easy to believe that our present senses may be so enlarged and refined that their activities and capa-

cities may amount to what would now, did we possess it, be equal to a new sense, or perhaps to many new senses. Besides, it is a narrower view than either reason or Scripture requires us to take, to limit our perceptions forever to five senses. The refinements of the glorified body may increase the number of our senses.

What says analogy? "We find," says Dr. Dick, "a considerable variety, in these respects, among the sensitive beings which inhabit our globe. Some animals appear to have only *one* sense, as the *muscle*, and the *zoophytes*; many have but *two* senses; some have *three*; and man, the most perfect animal, has only *five*. That superior beings, connected with other worlds, have additional senses to those which we possess, is highly probable, especially when we consider the general analogy of nature, and the gradations which exist among organized beings in our world. It forms no reason why we should deny that such senses exist, because we can form no distinct conceptions of any senses besides those which we possess. If we had been deprived of the senses of *sight* and *hearing*, and left to derive all our information merely through the medium of *feeling*, *tasting*, and *smelling*, we could have had no more conception of articulate language, of musical harmony and melody, of the beauties of the earth, and of the glories of the sky, than a *muscle*, a *vegetable*, or a *stone*."

In addition to this, we must be permitted to quote a paragraph, on this subject, from Taylor. "By means of these five senses, we become acquainted with some few of the properties of matter; but it is only a few;

and the intimate researches of our modern physical science leave no room to doubt that there are many agencies in activity about us, which, although they make themselves known in their ultimate consequences, are not directly cognizable either by the eye, the ear, the touch, the taste, or the smell. The external world, as at present perceptible to man, in five species, may, to other sentient natures, be perceptible in twenty, or in fifty kinds. If the mind may know the difference of hot and cold, hard and soft, loud or harsh and melodious, red and yellow, sweet and bitter, it may discriminate other differences, or qualities that belong to matter, or every other such quality. In truth, it is more easy to conceive of the mind as conversant with some, while it is insensible of others. The ancient philosophy supposed there to be four elements, or perhaps a fifth; but we now reckon fifty; in like manner, as now we think of five species of perception, hereafter we may become familiar with a hundred, or a thousand."

Imagine what a glorious advance would our perception experience by the evolution of a sense in the glorified body, by which chemical affinities, and all the modifications of chemical changes could at once be perceived. If we should be made able to gaze into the hidden dependencies and operations of nature. If "thus, besides knowing Effects, we should also know Causes; or, to speak more correctly, should be able to trace forms and affinities a stage or two higher than now we can. Instead of looking only at the dial-plate of nature, and of noting the hands and the figures, we should be admitted to inspect the wheel-work and the

springs ; and this inner perception of real forms might well consist with the simultaneous perception of external species : just as our dissection of an animal does not prevent or supersede our discernment of its form.”*

These hints may be sufficient to waken up our minds and hearts to an imperfect survey of the vast field of blessed perfection which stretches out into infinity before us ! What sights do we see — what sounds do we hear — what odors are wafted towards us ! — and how are all our senses regaled even in prospect of such a glorification !

If such the sweetness of the stream,
What must the fountain be !

We shall know it ! Yes, we shall know it all ! It lies before us ! Yet a little while, and the tarrying time is past. “The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed !”

SECTION II.

THE GLORIFICATION OF THE MENTAL POWERS.

IT is clearly taught in Scripture that sin has darkened and enfeebled our mental powers. Of sinners it is said : “Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.” Eph. iv. 18. Sin has torn man from all proper rela-

* Taylor’s Physical Theory of Another Life, pp. 61, 62.

tions to the source of knowledge — has caused him to centre his powers on self, and thus narrowed his circle and range of contemplation — has introduced the laws of death into his being, and thus benumbed his vital powers — has set free his passions and lusts, which bear down all the higher aspirations of his nature — in short, has caused him to love darkness more than light ; and he has gradually become like that which he loves.

The Scriptures also teach that man may be redeemed again from this mental degradation and ignorance. His intellectual nature is to be raised and perfected by the renovating powers of Christianity. That the Christian religion is adequate to this, and adapted to it, is proved by its history in the world. Two things the history of the world and the church incontrovertibly establishes : first, the kingdom of God on earth has ever been the centre and source of the truest and highest intellectual improvement : second, in regard to individuals, the wisest minds have always been associated with the purest hearts. Christ in types, before His incarnation, and Christ in His body, the Church, since His incarnation, ever was, is now, and ever will be, the light of the world.

What Christianity thus does, in part, in this life, it will complete in Heaven. The partial improvement in our nature, in the kingdom of grace, is the sure prophecy of its perfection in the kingdom of glory. This is plainly asserted in Scripture. “ We know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child : but when

I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." 1 Cor. xiii. 9-13.

As to the manner in which our intellectual nature shall be expanded, and our knowledge increased, in the future life, we refer to the principle which we have elsewhere, in this work, defended at length, that we must not conceive of the future life as violently dissimilar from this. We must not think of too sudden and abrupt an advance in death; much less must we think of an entire change in the laws, operations, and dependences of the mind, and of the mode of acquiring knowledge in another life. We must keep in mind that the life to come is the perfection of the present life. Not a life entirely different from this—yes, different, it is true; but rather in its outward conditions than in its inward essence. The transition from this into the future life is change only in the sense of evolution.

There will, therefore, beyond doubt be, there as here, room for the exercise of the intellectual faculties in the way of study and investigation. Reason will be active still, in prying into the fundamental principles of things. The judgment will still be active in balancing probabilities, in drawing inferences, and deducing conclusions. Memory will still call up the stored treasures of the past, and apply them to present use. The imagination will still wing its way over the surface of the field of knowledge, and gather materials for new combinations of beauty. More intensely, no doubt, but still according to the same laws, will the

mind enlarge its range, increase its powers, and promote its happiness, by promoting its perfection.

It cannot be objected, that acquiring knowledge by a process of investigation, would imply such care and labor as it would not be proper to associate with a life of heavenly rest and joy. It must be recollected that in the intellectual, as in the physical world, activity and exercise is health. The process of acquiring knowledge is itself happiness. Even in this world it is common for ardent minds to become so enamored with the pursuit of knowledge, that its pursuit is to them the highest luxury. If it is the case that here, where the labors of study and the difficulties of acquiring knowledge are so much greater, the pursuit of knowledge may become the highest source of happiness, how much more must this be the case in the world above, where renovated faculties will be active in a renovated body!

This manner of progress will also have the effect of making the happiness to be derived from it ever new. Every exercise of the mind will bring to view some new wonder of creative wisdom, and of redeeming love. Before the eternally advancing spirit, the vast universe of interesting wonders will continue to pass, as a delightful panorama, that shall never for a moment present the same objects to view; and, inasmuch as these successive revelations will inspire the adoration and praise of the saints, their songs will be never the same—every one will be a “new song!”

Besides, such exercise of the intellectual powers is necessary, in the very nature of things, to draw out the faculties of the mind in their true strength, and

thus to cultivate them toward perfection. As the health and lively tone of the body can only be preserved by personal exercise—as this cannot be furnished to hand by another; so the real advancement of the spirit cannot be secured by a furnishing of knowledge from an outward or foreign source; it must be done by a personal exercise of the intellectual faculties. Just as little as a tree can grow and expand by mere outward appliances, without an actual evolution of its own life, by its own activities from within, so little can intellectual faculties be unfolded by mere impartation, without an active assimilation under the power of an inward life. This is the divine order, as we believe, in Heaven, as well as on earth.

This is no doubt the reason why we read that the “angels desire to look” into the mysteries of redemption. God might have made known to them every thing at once; but this would not have afforded them an opportunity of expanding their own natures, by an active use of their powers, in which way alone it can be accomplished.

God has always revealed Himself, and all other knowledge, gradually. For this purpose, He has always used two modes or means; on the one hand, He exhibits the objects of knowledge, and on the other hand, He stimulates the faculties of men, by the exercise and application of which, these objects of knowledge are to be apprehended and appropriated. The exhibitions of Himself in His works, are such as invite investigation, and thus stimulate the intellectual faculties; and we find that some men learn more from

the same manifestations than others, because they ply their faculties more earnestly.

In like manner has God constituted the revelations of the Bible. Its deepest truths lie half hidden. Glittering wealth dawns out from the depths, to allure seekers. Gradually the mind grows adequate to the effort which is needed, and so fast also do the manifestations of God become luminous and instructive. Thus all divine revelations, whether in the sphere of physical, mental, or moral science, invite us to question them ; and thus we are led on to knowledge, while God exhibits the objects of knowledge, and by these means excites us to the exercise of our faculties, that they may become strong through use.

If we take the ground, that the future life of glory is a continuation of the present life of grace, and that the transition is an advance toward perfection by regular evolution, then we must believe that, as there are different grades of intellectual improvement here, so there will also be in the future world. There are evidently some who, as saints, pass out of this world with their intellectual faculties comparatively but little developed. Their ideas of themselves, of God's works, even of His revealed will, and of their relations and duties, are exceedingly narrow. "Creatures cannot take in all the vast, the infinite variety of conceptions in the full brightness and perfection of them, at once, of which they are capable in a sweet succession. Can we ever persuade ourselves, that all the endless train of thoughts and ideas, and scenes of joy, that shall ever pass through the mind of a saint through the long ages of eternity, should be crowded into every single

mind the first moment of its entrance into those happy regions? Such a bright confusion of notions, images, and transports, would probably overwhelm the most exalted spirit, and drown all the noble faculties of the mind at once. As if a man who was born blind should be healed in an instant, and should open his eyes first against the full blaze of the noon-day sun; this would so tumultuate the spirits, and confound the organs of sight, as to reduce the man back again to his first blindness.”* God’s glory, as well as the perfection of their own nature, and their consequent increase in happiness, demand that the process of improvement in these faculties be carried forward.

Now, this leads us to another thought, with an inference from it. How is this to be accomplished? Shall we say by miracle, and at once, as that world is entered? This is a common imagination; but we have just seen that, as our intellectual nature is constituted, this would frustrate the very object which is to be attained. We know, too, that this is not the order of life; for life always unfolds itself gradually. God might, in this life of grace, develop the intellectual nature of the saints suddenly and by miracle; but He does not pursue that course, the reasons of which suggest themselves very easily.

Neither can we imagine that these saints will be left to their own resources. This would be against His love, and a contradiction of all His dealings with His creatures. It is much more in accordance with what we know of God and his ways to suppose, that He will cause them to be assisted by superior, or more advanced

* Dr. Watts.

spirits. It is a pleasure to impart knowledge; it is even a greater happiness "to give than to receive." Why then may we not suppose that those saints which "are greatest in the kingdom of Heaven," communicate to those "which are least?" God has ordained that he who will be greatest shall serve the least; and may we not believe, also, that those are happiest in Heaven who make most happy around them? The Elder instructed John in reference to those that were clothed in white robes and had palms in their hands. Rev. vii. Why may not this be one of the happiest, as well as most honored employments of the older sons of immortality? Thus saints would continue the exercise of their prophetic office in Heaven, being instructors of each other, as well as being kings and priests unto God. May not the Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, and eminent saints, of all ages, be thus employed? Thus it would be literally fulfilled, that they who "turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars for ever and ever."

There are also other and higher intelligences in Heaven than sainted spirits, who may find a great portion of their happiness in opening the treasures of their higher wisdom to those who come from remote worlds; and especially to those who have been redeemed from a fallen race. More than all: there is nothing surer than that our blessed Saviour continues his prophetic office in the Heavenly Church, and that He, perhaps at stated periods, spreads out before the redeemed hosts the fullness of Divine wisdom, as it is in Him. "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the

throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto fountains of living waters." What lessons may thus be learned by those who are worthy, through the happy ages of a world without end !

Besides this, there is encouragement given in Scripture to the idea that, in addition to the regular mode of acquiring knowledge, the saints will have vastly increased powers of intuition ; and that at least some of their knowledge will be acquired by means of this power. Intuition is an inward teaching. It is a receiving of the knowledge of things, not merely by an outward representation of the objects of knowledge, but by a more direct inward enlightenment — by an easy spontaneity of mind, by which it possesses itself of truth and wisdom without an effort, and in a certain degree, without a process. Knowledge dawns forth from the mind by an easy necessity, as action springs from life. "'T is a more facile way of knowing," says Howe. "Here is no need of busy search, a tiresome indagation, a chaining together of consequences. The soul hath its clothing, its vestment of light, upon as cheap terms as the lilies theirs ; doth neither toil nor spin for it ; and yet Solomon, in all the glory of his far-famed wisdom, was not arrayed like it. This knowledge saves the expense of study ; is instantaneous, not successive." It is not meant, of course, that all knowledge will be thus acquired ; but that some of it will ; and that this intuitive force of mind will vastly facilitate the action of all the faculties of the glorified mind. As genius, in this world, does not supersede study, but rather invites and incites to it, so intuition in Heaven will not do away with those

pleasant investigations, the process of which is as a constant flow of the purest enjoyments to the soul.

This expansion of the mind by intuition is akin to that opening of the soul in the presence of God, which we have elsewhere treated of, as the beatific vision. As the presence of a kind friend causes our hearts to open sweetly toward him, so will the objects of knowledge in Heaven softly force themselves upon the faculties of the mind. Or, to use another illustration: As the warm sun causes the bud of the flower to expand by an objective influence, but as that objective power silently combines with the inward life of the bud, so, we may suppose, will the faculties of the mind be moved to evolution by the glorious objects of knowledge, affecting the spontaneity of the mind. By this means, though the mind, as already intimated, may act in the order of regular scientific process, it will, nevertheless, be in a free and easy way, without those laborious and toilsome transitions by which the mind here proceeds in its investigations. The efflorescence of the mind will be brought about with as easy and happy a grace as the blooming of a rose. It will be active without labor; busy without weariness. Thus Adam and Eve, even in their holy state, and before the curse of labor was upon them, were put "into the garden of Eden, to dress it, and to keep it."

It is easy to see that the pleasure of acquiring knowledge must be vastly increased when the mind, by this kind of free and active intuition, passes sweetly through what would here be a wearying process, and is thus animated by the light of truth, bursting upon it on all sides, spontaneous, quick, and fresh! What a happy

employment must it be, from some advantageous point of contemplation, to take in at a glance a vast field of knowledge, as the eye takes in a varied landscape; and to have all the myriads of objects within the range of heavenly vision, imaged in our glorified minds, as picturesque shores, and starry heavens, are mirrored in the quiet surface of a lake.

The Scriptures plainly allude to this mode of knowledge in the future life. "For we know in part." That is, we acquire knowledge by piecemeal, by fragments, and by way of aggregation or conquest, "but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away;" that is, in the future life, knowledge will dawn upon the soul full-orbed and entire. In this world, too, all knowledge is by reflection, from without in: "For now we see through a glass, darkly;" that is, we see things only reflected, represented, or declared in an outward way, which often makes them seem enigmatical, dark, (*αινίγματι*;) "but then face to face:" that is, we shall then have direct converse with the objects of knowledge; "now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." We shall then know, in a measure, as God now knows; and, in a certain degree also, in the way He knows.

In addition to all this, there may be modes of increasing the knowledge of the saints in Heaven, which are at present to us unknown. Who can tell the many ways by which, even on earth, the human mind is expanded; and the many improvements which have been made in doing it? The divine wisdom will be at no loss for facilities by which to communicate to

happy saints of His own fulness; causing their love to Him to increase in proportion as they advance in the knowledge of Himself, of His works, and His ways.

As to the objects of knowledge, we might say, in one word, they are all those things which are here consistently inquired into by the saints, and which tend to the perfection of their immortal nature. In all those things which we here know in part, our knowledge will there be enlarged and perfected. To particularize our thoughts, we may specify several departments of inquiry which will present themselves to our attention in the heavenly world.

We will there increase in the knowledge of ourselves. How little, comparatively, do we know of ourselves! Even our physical nature and history is full of mysteries and wonders to us. "Thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all." Eccl. xi. 5. How little do we know of the nature, laws, and ways of our spirits! The philosophy of our mental and moral natures, is comparatively but a playing upon the surface. When we look from without into a piece of complex machinery, we see the relations of some wheels to each other and the whole, and we note their movements; but on account of the many partially seen and unseen wheels, springs, and movements, the whole is confusion to us, rather than order; so when we look into our minds, there is so much only partially seen, and so much entirely hidden, that we know not whether an advance in our inquiries will make us wiser or bewilder us more! How little

do we know of the true and deepest relations of our various faculties to each other: of the relation of the mind with the matter in the body, and, through the body, with the material world around: of the relation of our spirits to other human spirits, and to other higher spirits, both good and evil: of the relation of our spirits to the Great Author of Spirits? Alas! we understand as a child. But will not all this be made plain to us in a higher order of things, when we shall know as also we are known? Who can doubt it? That which is in part shall all be done away, when that which is perfect is come.

Our views of God's works shall be immensely enlarged. We know but little, and that superficially, of that which is immediately around us. The science of Physics lies with one side in the dark! How little do we know of the harmonies of nature—the affinities between the elements and plants—the mysterious preferences of plants for each other—the strange partiality of insects for plants, and their hidden dependencies upon each other! What unknown wonders are connected with the instincts and habits of the innumerable orders of creatures which swarm over the earth, and with the part they are designed to act, and do act, in the glorious whole of the divine economy!

Yet more. Turn we our eyes toward the heavens! We see stars, star-clusters, planets, systems, worlds, which no man can number! What are they? To many they are but specks of light—diamonds in the sky! Science assures us that some of them are thousands of times larger than our globe. Telescopes discover yet innumerable other worlds in

the dim ether, which the naked eye sees not. Are these worlds inhabited? What kind of beings are there? What is their mental and moral character? Have they ever sinned? How do they stand related to us, and to God? These, and a thousand other inquiries that rise instinctively, are unanswered, in all that has, as yet, been revealed to us. But shall these questions never be answered? Shall endless ages continue to roll over us in Heaven, during which we shall grow in knowledge, and shall we still remain ignorant of all these worlds, and those that dwell on them? Who can believe this? The Saviour who created them and us, and who is the visible medium between an invisible God and all His creatures, will show us all things; and it will be part of our delightful employment to learn their history, and the economy under which they stand in a world without end!

We will, in Heaven, learn more about the boundless works and ways of God, in the glorious system of Redeeming Love. Here, emphatically, do we know in part, and prophesy in part. Even an inspired Apostle was led to exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." Rom. xi. 33.

The vast moral economy of God, as it extends over the inhabitants of all worlds, is no doubt in its substance one. There is no doubt an intimate relation between us and the inhabitants of all worlds. We have an interest in them, though its nature be now unknown to us. They have an interest in us, and in the history of our world. If not, why did the morning stars sing

together, and all the sons of God shout for joy, when God laid the foundations of the earth? We are told that He who is the Saviour of our world, is also the Creator of all worlds, and the King over all. "God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth." Phil. ii. 9, 10. In another passage we are told that God has set Him "far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Eph. i. 21-23. Being thus over all, and over all to the Church, we must be related to all through Him.

What the nature of this relation is, it will no doubt be our privilege, and if our privilege, then certainly our happiness, to discover. If we are now, and are to be still in future, thus associated with other realms of creation, in one Head and Ruler, it seems certain that we shall become acquainted with the nature and history of these other economies. It seems evident, from Scripture, that other orders of beings are in some way interested in the work of redemption by Christ; and that they are to become wiser by their future fellowship with us, as well as by their present relation to us, who are now, and shall remain, members of the Church which is His body. Paul tells us plainly, that principalities and powers in heavenly places shall learn by the Church the manifold wisdom of God! Eph. iii.

10. Into these things the angels even now desire to look; and over one sinner that repents there is joy in their presence! If they shall learn from us, why not we from them? If they are interested in us, we certainly sustain such a relation to them, as makes us interested in them. We know it not now—we have only obscure hints of it, and a sweetly subdued presentiment of it. We shall know it hereafter. Mutually shall we teach each other, and mutually shall we be taught, the manifold mysteries which have been hidden in God from the foundation of the world; and mutually shall we rejoice together in the notes of the everlasting song, ever loving Him better as we know Him more!

What a field will also lie open before us in the history of God's providential dealings with us, as connected with the history of this world!

The children of Israel, after they were in quiet possession of the Land of Promise, were frequently reminded of the way in which God had led them. Such dealings of God as were at the time dark, mysterious, and inexplicable, were afterwards made plain to them; and they were thus led to praise His wisdom, and to repent of their murmurings against Him. Deut. viii. 2, 3. God ever says to his people, while he leads them about in strange ways, "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter."

God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

All those dealings of God with us, which remain dark and mysterious, and often apparently contradictory, to

the end, will be made plain to us in Heaven. When our expanded minds shall be able to take in a wider range of God's economy, all will be seen to be harmonious, and right, and good.

In how many ways are we blest in the Providence of God, by means of others whom we may never know, and of whose acts towards us we may never be informed in this world! Shall we never be permitted to know those who have thus blest us, that we may express our gratitude to them, and rejoice with them in that grace which wrought good for us by their hands? Who can doubt it? May it not be a delightful part of heavenly employments and enjoyments, for saints to relate to each other, amid raptures of gratitude and love, the peculiar circumstances in which they were sweetly forced to yield to each other's influences, and to trace the strange winding providences through which grace pursued them, until they were safely embraced in the eternal kingdom!

In all these excursions through the fields of celestial science we will become more and more acquainted with God—His nature, His attributes, His works, and His ways. There He, who is God manifest in our flesh, will declare Him to us. For, hear how he prays, and in that prayer promises: “Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. And I have declared unto them thy name, *and will declare it!*” John xvii. 24–26.

With such facilities for acquiring heavenly knowledge, and with such fields of inquiry before us, the

most lively imagination cannot draw a picture of the length and the breadth, the height and the depth of that wisdom to which the saints shall attain in the future life. It passeth all understanding !

Think, oh ! my soul, of the increased powers with which thou shalt enter this field of endless inquiry ! Think of the ages upon ages which are before thee, and in which thou shalt be occupied in diving deeper, soaring higher, and winging a wider flight over the bright realms of the blest, to make new discoveries of the highest wisdom ! Think that there, no interruptions, from a languid body, from obstructing difficulties, or from distracting cares, shall distress thee more ! Think of the high order of intelligent and holy associates, with whom thou shalt explore the wide-spread kingdoms of the great God ! Think, too, that all which thou shalt ever learn and know, will point toward God the Father, Son, and Spirit, as its ever glorious centre : furnishing ever new, and yet more captivating exhibitions of His goodness and love ! Then, as thou art blest in these high and happy employments, thou shalt join in praise with those who "rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come !" And thou shalt worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast thy crown before the throne and before the LAMB, saying, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created !"

SECTION III.

THE GLORIFICATION OF OUR MORAL NATURE.

And thou shalt walk in soft, white light, with kings and priests abroad,
And thou shalt summer high in bliss, upon the hills of God.

As sin has affected our entire being, we must of course expect to find its evil effects in our moral, as well as in our physical, and intellectual, constitution and faculties; and as our moral renovation, following the laws of life, is a process, we cannot suppose ourselves at any time, in the present life, to have reached a point of absolute moral perfection. We must ever say, as long as we dwell in the bosom of a fallen world, with the Apostle: “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God, in Christ Jesus.” Phil. iii. 12–14.

The glorification of our moral nature, as connected with the life to come, is in so many ways brought before the minds of Christians, both in the Scriptures and in expositions of Scripture, that we need not here discuss the subject in detail. We will refer only to its main features.

The glorification of our moral nature involves the glorification of the WILL, with all the affections which flow from it.

The will is the deepest—the ruling, faculty of our moral nature. As long as the will is in any way enslaved, grace has not yet fully triumphed. It is the aim of Christianity to restore to the will its proper supremacy. This will be accomplished when once there is such a union effected between our will and the divine will of God, as shall make His will the life and rule of ours. Grace in this life is effecting a gradual approximation to this result; and the process will become complete in glory.

In the first sin the will of man separated itself from the Divine will, assumed a position outside of it, and in opposition to it. This position is retained wherever sin reigns, and in proportion as it reigns. Grace will bring these antagonisms into harmony with each other, by destroying the enmity; and glory will exhibit the blessed result.

There are three great powers under which the will is now held in bondage—the world—the flesh—and the devil. These powers are the servants of sin, and their influence will be felt upon the will even of Christians more or less, as long as they are in the present life of probation. The world, in all its forms, will have power over us, in a degree, as long as we are in the world. The flesh will influence us while we are in the flesh. The devil will affect us as long as we are in that territory in which he is permitted to exert his power. Death, however, will remove us beyond the reach and influence of these powers; and consequently

the pressure which here afflicts our wills, must there be forever removed. Thus the glorification of the moral nature will have been attained.

Thus we see that freedom from sin is the first and most important requisite to the glorification of our moral nature. In heaven this will be reached; for there the saints are free from sin. Sin is the great fundamental source of all moral imperfection. It poisons and pollutes the fountains of moral life, and causes all the waters that flow from it to be dark and deadly. It is in itself the greatest evil in the universe; to be free from it must be the greatest good.

It is true, sin is not practically regarded as such an evil and imperfection, by those who love it, and whose wills are under its power. They consider it as the very essence of earthly happiness; but sinners know neither its nature nor its hatefulness. One who is to some extent under the power of grace, and in whom some degree of conformity to the divine will has been wrought, can alone feel what sin is; and he only can have a true conception of the blessedness of freedom from it. Hence he looks forward to this consummation with the most ardent desire. We do not wish to bring anything into the presence of a friend which we know to be extremely offensive to that friend. Now, in proportion as a Christian has attained to an union in love with God, will the thought of appearing before Him with any sinfulness attaching to him, be painful to his mind and heart.

Oh! then, what a source of blessedness it is to us, to know that the remains of sin in us, which we so much hate, and which God hates still more, and which

unfits us for fellowship with holy beings, will all be taken from us at the gate, and that we shall be clothed in the beauty of holiness, that we may appear in the presence of an holy God with exceeding joy! Without the removal of this imperfection, even Heaven itself could not make us happy. With this fire in our hearts, and this serpent in our bosoms, no place, and no circumstances, can bring blessedness to our spirits.

What did it benefit the leper Naaman, that he was rich, and surrounded with everything that could be asked to render life desirable and happy, as long as the fearful rot of leprosy wrought in his system? Wherever he was, there was misery with him, because it was in him. This is a type of sin; and a fit one it is; but far, very far, does the substance exceed the type. The leprosy was in the body, but sin is in the soul. Death released the leper's body from its pains, but death will quicken the sting of sin! The spirit, passing into eternity, will only see its shame, and feel its wretchedness the more. The presence of God, and the holiness of the place, would make sin a thousand times more hideous than it even now appears. But what joy to have all the stains of sin washed away in the blood of the Redeemer! Even in the prospect of it, the Christian's heart exclaims, in the joy of a glorious hope: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness." Ps. xvii. 15.

The perfection of our moral nature in Heaven requires not only the removal of sin, but also all the consequences of sin, and the effects which these have wrought in our nature. The consequences of sin are

as numerous as the ills and woes of life; for all are occasioned by it.

By sin our moral, as well as our intellectual faculties, have been brought under the curse: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat thy bread, till thou return unto the ground." The higher spiritual nature must be bound down to serve the wants of the body! Those noble faculties of the mind, which should have looked up to inquire after and know God, must look down to seek bread for a body weakened by sin! Those noble faculties of the spirit, which should have adored God, and rejoiced in moral communion with Him, must wait to see the body fed! This was not so before the fall, when the earth yielded food spontaneously to supply the wants of man. The curse which fell on sin effected it all.

Now behold the reign of toil! Who can count the sighs and groans which ascend from the burdened multitudes of earth? How does the poverty-stricken man of God toil for his daily bread! He stands beneath the smiting rays of the summer sun, while heavy drops fall down upon the axe and the hoe. Another is digging in the deep, damp, dark mines, where he but seldom breathes the fresh air of heaven, or sees the genial light of the sun. Others ply the long hours in cellars or in garrets, burning the sickly lamp, and, with it, consuming the oil of life! The more they waste away, the more do they moan and make a noise in their complaint!

I long to lay my weary head
And aching heart beneath the soil;
To slumber in that dreamless bed,
From all my toil!

This is the curse — one of the consequences of sin. This penalty, which dooms the moral being to slavish toil, causes him to bend all his spiritual energies toward the wants of the body, however much a kind God in mercy may overrule it for good, is nevertheless a curse, and degrading to the moral nature. It hinders the improvement and advancement of the moral nature, interferes with the free exercise of the will in reference to higher objects, and makes our noblest faculties the slaves of sense and earth. In Heaven this curse will be removed, with sin, of which it is a consequence.

There the weary will be at rest. There the servant is free from his master. There they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes!

The perfection of man's moral nature in Heaven also requires that created wills be brought into right relations to each other. The human will can only be perfected when it is brought into a right relation to all other wills. In this world, wills crowd upon each other to their mutual detriment. A vast amount of the degradation, and consequent wretchedness, in the present world, is brought about by *oppression*. As, in a garden, those plants never come to perfection, over which others extend their branches and their shade; so, in human society, no will can come to perfection where another bears it down. The poet has well said,

Man's inhumanity to man
Makes countless thousands mourn !

Sin, of course, is the cause of oppression; and all oppression is sin. All the tears that have fallen under its iron rack, would make a river! and all the groans which its victims have uttered, if gathered into one, would rend the heavens! Oh! what pictures might be drawn! "Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth!" "So I returned," says Solomon, "and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and beheld the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter. Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive." In vain do we look for a free and full evolution of the moral nature, where the selfishness of men produces such a conflict of interests — where self-will takes the place of good-will, and where oppression represses the energy of every weaker will. In such case, of course, all those affections which depend on the will, and have their life from it, will be like plants in the shade. In Heaven all this evil is no more. Then the will is like a plant in good soil, and in a genial clime. The moral nature will unfold itself freely and beautifully, as a rose opens in its season. How often do we sigh for such a world! How blessed must it be to be there!

This leads us to remark, that to the glorification of our moral nature in Heaven belong also the glorification of all those affections which flow from the will.

From a will in perfect harmony with the divine will, must flow the purest stream of love to God. Here our love is slow and imperfect, because our will is weak. Here our love is in proportion as grace makes us willing; and when grace makes our wills perfect, then will our love be also perfect. This shall be consummated in the world of love. For this the Christian often sighs.

O love divine, how sweet thou art!
When shall I find my willing heart
 All taken up by thee!
I thirst, and faint, and die to prove
The greatness of redeeming love:
 The love of Christ in me.

The perfection of our love to God will produce, as its consequence, the perfection of our social affections, in their relation to all holy beings. We are in the highest and in the deepest possible sense social beings. This social nature we will not lose in death. Our highest powers are framed in reference to it; and it modifies and adorns them all. In Heaven our social nature will be glorified.

The society of the heavenly world is briefly sketched in Heb. xii. 22-24. It consists of an innumerable company of angels—the general assembly and church of the first-born—God the Judge of all—the spirits of just men made perfect—and Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant! What a blessed society is this! Happy are they who are accounted worthy of standing in so glorious a circle!

There are several things which belong to the heavenly social life that are found on earth in but a

limited degree, but which are essential elements in the blessed perfection of Heaven.

First there will be *perfect confidence*. Society on earth is made defective, and often a source of bitterness, by a want of faith. Jealousy, envy, suspicion, and doubt, steal the life and love from its heart. When we feel freest and happiest in social intercourse, we are often compelled to hold back the flow of our feelings from a fear of betrayal, and from fear that some wily one might take advantage of our ingenuousness. Alas! that it should be so! But we are led, from a knowledge of the perfidy of earth, to throw certain guards around us; as the flower hides its heart by rows of rough outside petals. The existence of such necessity shows how ungenial a clime earthly society is for the perfection of our social nature. In Heaven, where sin does not exist, there can be no need of such precautions. In that realm of pure love and perfect confidence, the heart need not fear to open its richest treasures; and by opening them it will perfect its own affections.

Besides this, there will there be *perfect sympathy*. For various reasons, we are often not able to find, even in the choicest society of earth, full sympathy for all our thoughts and feelings. This is often a source of secret wo. Lonely indeed is he, with whom none can feel—whose thoughts none can measure and appreciate. This is often the case with our deepest feelings, and our most earnest thoughts. Those emotions which lie farthest back in the soul, and which struggle most ardently for a sympathetic element in which to live and be satisfied, are those which none can measure and

meet. It was no doubt one of the deepest elements of the Saviour's sorrow, that, in His intercourse with men, He could find no hearts to measure His own ! In this respect he stood alone among men. Even His own disciples did only partially understand Him, and consequently could only, in a small degree, sympathise with Him. This is, to some extent, the case with every Christian on earth. His joys, his sorrows, his thoughts, his feelings, his hopes, and his fears, do but rise to fall back again and vanish in his own bosom. His life is hidden ; and he trusts not its rich treasures to a cold selfish world ; or if he does, few are either willing or able to fathom its depths. Thus the heart, like a pool that has no outlet, becomes itself dark and cloudy, if not even the home of stagnation and death !

Our social nature must have a free flow into the sympathetic bosom of others, in order to perfect itself. This it can do in Heaven. There full sympathy exists between the happy inhabitants. Every emotion will find an echo in myriads of hearts. Every full feeling that overflows will have a thousand hearts to receive it. There is no thought so deep but that it will be measured by some in the blissful company. If it cannot be responded to by angels or sainted spirits, there is the great High Priest, whose thoughts are deep as the God-head, and varied as the experiences of all saints. Blessed society ! Happy are they who shall be introduced into it, to share in its confidence and sympathy for ever and ever ! There we shall rightly learn to love, and fully to know and feel what it is to be beloved !

All the days of our appointed time will we wait, till
our change come. He shall call for us, and we will
answer Him. O tender Father ! keep our hearts well
filled with the blessed hope of that which so surely
awaits us.

It is a weary way, and I am faint:
I pant for purer air and fresher springs:
O Father ! take me home ; there is a taint,
A shadow on earth's purest, brightest things.
This world is but a wilderness
To me :
There is no rest, my God,
Apart from thee !

CHAPTER XI.

The Beatific Vision.

Here will be *oculi bibuli, thirsty eyes*; a soul ready to drink in glory at the eye. If vision be by intromission, what attractive eyes are here, drawing in glory, feeding upon glory! If by extramission, what piercing, darting eyes, sending forth the soul at every look to embrace the glorious object!

HOWE.

THERE is an element of heavenly felicity revealed in the Scriptures, which has been expressed in theological language by the words—"beatific vision." The word beatific does not only mean to be blessed or happy, but it has the reflex meaning *to make* blessed or *to make* happy—*beatus*, blessed, and *facio*, I make.

This beatitude is something objective or external to the saint, and which has power in itself to stream felicity upon him; not something merely which affords happiness to the saint according to his capacity to receive it, but which has the power to enlarge that capacity, and filling the desire which it itself enlarges. It is not merely representative—not merely reflective—but communicative.

The Old Testament dispensation represented Heaven

to our hopes—the New Testament dispensation reflects and partly communicates it to our faith—the heavenly dispensation, being the substance of what is represented and reflected, communicates it to us. In this world, heaven dawns in the saints; there, the saints will be in heaven. The light of the sun is light still, even when reflected upon us from the moon, but it has lost its warmth, and its keen, life-imparting power; so the bliss of heaven in the saints, in this life, is heavenly, but not so immediate and direct, not so inwardly vivid and bliss-imparting. God and the Lamb and the ever blessed spirit, the triune source and centre of heavenly joy, will emerge from behind those intervening media through which we were wont to contemplate them as in a glass darkly, and arise in full-orbed splendor upon the sainted soul. “I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it.” Rev. xxi. 22–24. We shall be prepared to enjoy this glorious vision when once we dwell, with sanctified souls, in glorified bodies.

This direct beatific interview with God, the deepest source of heavenly bliss, is variously set forth in the Scriptures. Thus, “In my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.” “As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness.” “Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.” “For now we see through a glass darkly (enigmatically); but then face

to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." "And they shall see his face."

From these passages we may learn what is included in the *Beatific Vision*.

I. It is to see God.

Though this expression, "see God," is, in its deepest sense, figurative, and has, as such, reference to a spiritual perception of Him, yet we need not hesitate to say that it includes also the literal. Our glorification in Heaven involves also the glorification of the body; and we have no reason to think, from anything said in scripture, that the organs of sense in the body will be abolished and destroyed. The salvation of the Scriptures, is a salvation of all that has not been introduced by sin. The senses, and of course sight, as one of them, belonged to the original constitution of man; he had them in his state of primeval holiness, and they were a part of that which God pronounced "very good." As man was in his holy state, so shall he be, substantially, when he is redeemed.

Neither have we any reason to doubt that Heaven, as a place, and not merely as a state, will present objects to the sight of saints. That God himself, in some way unknown to us now, will manifest himself to our visive powers in Heaven, no scripture prevents us from believing. "There shall no man see me and live," teaches only that while the saint lives in the flesh, he cannot endure the glorious sight; hence it has been a general belief that if any one should see

God he would die. This does not at all teach that such sight may not be endured in glorified bodies, and in a glorified state. The expression of the Apostle as applied to God: "who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto: whom no man hath seen, nor can see"—can only mean, to be consistent with other passages, that no man can approach him while in his mortal state; and that no man can see him *out of Christ*, who is the manifested God. No other interpretation of these passages would preserve their harmony with those which declare that we shall "see him as he is," see him "face to face;" and especially with the strong language of Job, where he speaks plainly of the life *after* the resurrection: "In my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another."

We do not, therefore, exclude from our idea of the Beatific Vision all sensible manifestations of God's glory, even though we admit that the deepest idea involved in the expression, to "see God," is that of a spiritual perception. Some sensible manifestations of Himself, far more immediate and glorious than any the saint ever enjoys in this life, will dawn out upon him from that excellent glory with which the Great God clothes Himself as with a garment in that celestial place which is His special habitation.

II. To enjoy the Beatific Vision is to "see His face."

By this expression we do not understand merely seeing God in His general manifestations, but in His central, most prominent, and most peculiarly gracious character. The face is the noblest and brightest fea-

ture in any being. It is the focus in which all expression is concentrated, and by which it is made intense and impressive. Hence, in our intercourse with men, we instinctively turn to the face as the medium of the clearest and most direct communication with their minds and hearts. Gen. xxxi. 2-5. It is there that we seek the index of their feelings toward us. Hence by our address to God, "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us," we mean, Turn to us with the evidence of thy complete favor, even as a friend turns to us with the smiles of his face. Hence also the hiding of God's face means, to see and feel the evidences of His displeasure in His dark dispensations, and in His just judgments. As, therefore, the face is the best revelation of the mind and heart of the entire being, so to see God's face is to see Him in that way which will reveal to us the brightest and most gracious features of His character.

From the promise that we shall see His face, we may therefore expect, besides those revelations which He shall continue to make, as in this world, in nature, in providence, in beings around Him, and in the exhibition of His general glory, more immediate and more gracious manifestations of His love to us. We shall then behold His glory, not only by reflection and representation, as when "He holdeth back the face of his throne and spreadeth his cloud upon it;" but we shall enjoy it by communication — by a vision which will admit us directly into His divine heart and mind, even as the smile of a friend's countenance admits us into his heart.

The vision of His face, when viewed by the saints

in the manner now described, must give peculiar joy. The saints are often encouraged to look forward to it as the consummation of their bliss. "When His glory shall be revealed, ye shall be glad also with exceeding joy." 1 Peter iv. 13. We know that the smiles of a friend send an immediate and mysterious thrill of joy to the heart. Our own countenances become radiant in the light of his love. What must it be when God, by the smiles of his face, shall render us sweetly conscious that His special favor is resting upon us! "Thy loving kindness is better than life." "In thy presence is fullness of joy!"

III. We have also the promise that in the Beatific Vision we shall see Him "face to face."

Saints and God shall meet in holy and joyous intercourse without any intervening hindrance or obscurity. What is it that, in this life, causes obscurity in the intercourse of saints with God? It is their remaining imperfections. Their spiritual attitude is not fully like His, and does not meet His with a perfectly open congeniality. There this difficulty will not exist. They will behold His face *in* righteousness, and awake in His likeness. That is, they being now perfectly holy, shall meet God in His own image—His own image in the saints will face Him, and He will contemplate it with infinite delight. Then there will be, of course, a perfect sympathy. The heart of the one will answer to the heart of the other, as in water face answereth to face; and the very peace and bliss of God which passeth all understanding will light up His own image in the saint with exceeding joy. "I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness."

Without holiness in the saint, he and God cannot be brought together face to face. Hence it is said that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." The saints being thus qualified to meet God, will have direct and satisfying intercourse with Him. "Blessed are the pure in heart; for *they* shall see God." Not through the medium of ordinances merely, but immediate and personal; in a way suitably analogous to the "face to face" communion of friend with friend. How great is the difference of holding intercourse with one we love, by letter or through others, and doing it face to face, by words, looks, and features! So great must be the difference between the communion of saints with God through media, as in this life, and direct, as in Heaven, where no dark glass intervenes.

This vision, face to face, will have an intensely communicative and transforming power. "We shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is." Those more remote communications with Him, which are enjoyed even in this life, are already, to an extent, transforming. "Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image from glory to glory." But there this process will be increased, as objects become more clearly transparent the nearer they are brought to the fountain of light. "Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." If the smile of a friend, with which he irradiates his face at his own will, has power to change the sad heart and face of another into the image of gladness and joy; how infinitely more powerful must be the light of God's countenance in waking up the souls of the saints in Heaven to a

joyful sense of His favor and love! Even a pleasant sunlit landscape has the power of transcribing its own serene and joyous image into the heart of him who contemplates it. The thoughts of one man, spread out upon the pages of a book, have power to work an intellectual assimilation in the mind of him who hangs over the page, if he yield himself to their influence. So it must be also spiritually, only in a higher degree. The holiness which beams from God's face makes that pure upon which it shines. The power of objective holiness produces subjective holiness. "One sight of His glorious majesty presently subdues and works the soul to a full subjection. One sight of His purity makes it pure. One sight of His loveliness turns it into love." "There be many that say, Who will show us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us."

IV. In the Beatific Vision "we shall see Him as He is."

There is always a difference between things in their true nature and our apprehension of them. The actually revealed, even in regard to things belonging to the system of things at present immediately around us, always leaves something hidden. We see but in part — we know but on the surface. We stand in the presence of mysteries — Oh, that we could stand reverently!

More especially is this true in regard to the things of the future life. They lie beyond our sight, beyond our knowledge, and to a great extent beyond our consciousness. God stands in the awful cloud! He does not show, but only *declares* His glory. We see Him,

not as He is, but only as He is reflected and represented from what He has done, and is still doing. He causes His goodness to pass before us, as He did before Moses; but at the same time declares, “Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live”—that is, no one while living in this world shall see me. When the veil, by which He now hides His glory from mortal eyes, is taken away by death, we shall see Him, not as He seems to be, but as He is.

We may illustrate the difference between seeing God, in His representations of Himself, and seeing Him as he is—thus: What a different idea have we of a tree when we view it in its full growth, from what we have when we study it in all its history of becoming what it is;—could we see the whole process of evolution, the action of the elements and factors which enter into its constitution, its connections and affinities with all the causes and conditions upon which its growth depends, the mysterious force which lies at its foundation, and its silent life, ever the same in power, yet never the same in form—could we take in all this with the same clear and immediate sight with which we take in the tree as it stands before us, how different would be these two views!

Or, carrying the same mode of remark into a higher and more magnificent sphere of things: Suppose we could enter, in the same manner, into the hidden order and process of creation as a whole, as it has, from the beginning, been proceeding from God as the effect of His creative power. Standing, as God does, behind things, and viewing them in the process of becoming what they are, instead of viewing them merely in their

present form, as this exhibits only the results of the sublime process. What a difference in the two views! This position science, with all its diligence, has not yet reached—it is comparatively but a play upon the surface of creation, while—Oh, what depths still lie beneath! Such a view of creation none but the Son of God—the Infinite Wisdom—has ever enjoyed. Prov. viii. 27–31.

Farther still. It is granted that God's manifestations of Himself are not exhausted by any means in that sphere of creation to which we have now referred, but that they extend into still higher regions, and into systems of manifestation still nearer to Himself—systems including organisms and organizations of intelligent beings, in which, and by which, He reveals Himself. Suppose we should be admitted also behind this veil, to witness this display of creative power and revealing glory. In addition to this, suppose we could gain a position analogous to what we have just referred to, in reference to the wonderful system of redeeming grace!—that we should be permitted and enabled to see, from behind the veil, the movements of the divine love and mercy towards us in the plan of our salvation—that we should be “able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height: and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, filled with all the fulness of God;”—Oh, this would be to see His glory indeed! This would be to see Him as He is, in a degree, and to an extent, of which we can now scarcely form any conception. This would be a glimpse into the arcana of divine activities, and a view of Him, such as perhaps

no created intelligence has ever yet enjoyed. Into these things angels have not yet looked; but have only *desired* to look.

Such a view into the now secret depths of deity, in a measure at least, we have reason to believe, will in the future life be granted to the saints. Oh, listen! “Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to THE INTENT *that now unto principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.*”

To the same purpose is the language of the Apostle in 1 Corinthians xiii. He says that “knowledge shall vanish away”; by which he does not mean, certainly, that there shall be no knowledge there; but only that *our present mode of knowledge*, by empirical induction, shall, to an extent at least, give way to intuition. We shall be brought into such a nearness to God, that we shall know from within out, instead of penetrating by a painful process, and then only as by fragments, from without in. Now “we know in part, and prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass darkly”—that is, things which we see are as enigmas to us, having their true meaning hidden—“but then

face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." Who can fathom the glory and blessedness of that view, when we shall see God as He now sees us, and know Him as He now knows us!

When once we are "with Him where He is," then shall we "behold His glory." In this world, we poor pilgrims walk as in a night faintly illumined by the reflected light of a cold moon and of distant stars; but, oh! how bright and genial will be the sun of righteousness, when he shall rise over us, in the future life, and hold his radiant way along the heaven of heavens! "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; *for we shall see him as he is.*"

To see God thus, in the deepest and most inward manifestations of Himself, and to feel at the same time that we love Him supremely, and that He loves us as the apple of His eye — this is blessedness! "I look upon the face of a stranger and it moves me not; but upon a friend, and his face presently transforms mine into a lively cheerful aspect. As iron sharpeneth iron, so does the face of man his friend — puts a sharpness and quickness into his looks. The soul that loves God, opens itself to Him, admits His influences and impressions, is easily moulded and wrought to His will, yields to the transforming power of His appearing glory. There is no resistant principle remaining, when the love of God is perfected in it; and so overcoming is the first sight of His glory upon the awaking soul, that it perfects it."

If the view which the disciples on Tabor had of the glory of the manifested God was so satisfying that they were willing to have their portion there—build tabernacles there, and there remain, caring nothing for all the world beside, how much more so must be that vision on the mount on high, only one ray of which illumined the heights of Tabor! We shall be “presented before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.” If our love to Him, and a sense of His love to us, while we “see him not,” brings “joy unspeakable and full of glory,” oh, what must it be when we shall see Him—see His face—see Him face to face—see Him as He is!

Then, though we will retain our own personality, we shall fully live in Him. Then shall we realize the sense of the many expressions ‘in Him’—‘He in us,’ and ‘we in Him.’ He will be our other self, into which we shall be able to transfer our life at pleasure. His life will live in us; and then we shall know what it is to be “partakers of the divine nature.”

To see God! O, my soul, canst thou realize it? To see our adorable Redeemer! The thought of it is bliss. The hope of it is new life to the soul. The promise of it is an “eternal weight of glory.” The fulfilment of it!—yes, O believer, this blessedness awaits thee. Meanwhile, let us humbly lie in the dust, and adore!

CHAPTER XII.

The Worship of Heaven.

High in yonder realms of light,
Dwell the raptured saints above ;
Far beyond our feeble sight,
Happy in Immanuel's love.

'Mid the chorus of the skies,
'Mid the angelic lyres above,
Hark ! — their songs melodious rise,
Songs of praise to Jesus' love !

HERE is nothing for the faithless worldling. He is of the earth, earthy. The organ by which heavenly things are tasted, is not in him. Alas, how blind, how deaf, how dull is the natural man ! Seeing, he sees not, hearing, he hears not, and in the midst of knowledge, he does not know. Let him who knows what worship is by sweet experience, read on.

When we, with spiritual eyes and ears, and with a believing heart, rove through the rich landscape which divine revelation spreads out before us, we see in all directions glorious openings into the serene realms of the better land. The view of faith penetrates the infinite, pronounces it real and full of promise. The

heart becomes conscious of a living fellowship "with the church that is in His presence." We behold the solemn movement of worshippers behind the veil. From unseen regions they come, the choral anthems of the skies, and fall, now loud and animating, now soft and sweet, upon the heart. Yes, the hills and valleys of earth have been vocal with the worship of Heaven. Whenever the song was too mighty for Heaven to hold, it burst forth through the portals of the skies, to astonish and delight the ears of mortals.

On several grand occasions have the joyful anthems of the heavenly choir resounded through the earth. Once at the first creation; for when God laid the foundations of the earth, "the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." At the beginning of the new creation, as soon as the angel had announced to the shepherds the fact that the new-born Saviour was in the manger, "suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men." Again, when the last opposing power shall be cast down, and the triumphs of the great remedial Kingdom are complete, earth shall hear once more the triumphant song, "Alleluia: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

The worship of the heavenly world is a most delightful feature in the expected bliss of the saints. How full of pure enjoyment is the exercise of worship even in the Church on earth, notwithstanding all the abatements to its joy caused by the imperfections of the worshippers. The soul of the saint knows no purer bliss on this side the grave, than when it is absorbed

in adoring worship. What higher feelings can possibly pervade the heart than those of faith, and hope, and love?—especially the greatest of these, which is love. Faith and hope may have their seasons of painful trembling, like the agitated needle in the compass when it seeks the pole; but love is that perfect grace, the exercise of which in worship brings perfect joy. “God is love: and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.”

Even the still spirit that worships alone, like Jacob in the field at eventide, like Peter on the housetop, or like Christ in the lonely mountains of Galilee, absorbed in the glorious object of its devotion, feels a fullness of joy which annihilates all want, and presses the heart to exclaim, “Thou art my PORTION, O Lord!” Yet, even richer than this, is the worship of the Great Congregation. There, in addition to the strength of his own individual feelings, the worshipper is silently and powerfully drawn into the stream of a communion-life broader and deeper than his own, by the power of which he is borne on toward the bosom of his God. He feels the truth that God is in His holy temple. He reviews his vows, receives assurance of pardon, and joins in the grateful song of redeeming love. Oh, it is a heavenly place in Christ Jesus!—it is

“Glory begun below.”

If the engagements of worship are so heavenly even on earth, what must they be in Heaven! What a sight appears to the enraptured eye of faith as we gaze into that holiest place on high! See Cherubs and seraphs, with veiled faces, and in the most pro-

found humility, bending at the foot of the throne. See the innumerable company of angels make their reverential prostrations before Him that made them such, “and did create their bliss.” See saints clothed in white robes, with harps and palms, join in the full chorus: “Worthy is the Lamb.” Hear the notes of the eternal anthem, now in deep cadence, like the sound of many waters, and now “in notes as soft as angels use,” roll back from the distant heavens.

Tell me the subject of their lays,
And whence their loud, exalted praise;
Jesus, the Saviour, is their theme,
They sing the wonders of his name!

SECTION I.

THE NATURE OF HEAVENLY WORSHIP.

As to the nature of the heavenly worship, there are two ways in which we may arrive at correct conceptions of it. We may contemplate it as the continuation and perfection of that worship which God has instituted and approved in the church on earth. Or we may examine those passages of Scripture in which allusions to heavenly worship are made.

We must not fail, if we would think aright in regard to the kingdom of God, always to preserve in our minds the identity of the church on earth and the church in Heaven. There is one church including “the saints on earth, and all the dead,” in one communion. As Jesus, the Head of the Church, has passed into Heaven, so the whole church, as His body,

must pass over also—not becoming a different church, but a perfect one, by the transition. We can see, in the “earnest expectation” of the church militant, the incipient prophetic intimations of what will be found developed in the church triumphant to its full perfection. Here on earth do the saints attempt, in many discords and stammerings, to learn that song which is sung by those above in the most perfect harmony. The worship of Heaven is the same in kind, only higher in degree, as that on earth.

That such an identity exists between the worship of the church on earth and that in Heaven, is verified by the clear testimony of Scripture. The Apostle says that those who, according to the order appointed of God, offer gifts, “serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things.” Heb. viii. 5. The same Apostle Chapter ix. 23, calls those things, and those services, which constituted the order of worship, “the pattern of things in the heavens.” The holy places made with hands are called “the figures of the true.” The High Priest in the Jewish worship was a type of the true High Priest, which is Christ. His passing into the holiest place was a figure of Christ’s passing into the heavens. In short, all that pertained to worship was but the shadow of yonder substance. As the reflected heavens, which lie beneath the glassy surface of a lake, are a true transcript of the heavens which are extended above, so the worship which God has appointed in the church on earth is a true type of that which is to be continued in glorious perfection in the kingdom and church of the saints on high. O blessed truth, that the holy habits of worship which

we cultivate here, are not lost when we pass the veil, but will appear as our advantage, when we are called to join the worship of our sainted brethren above! O blessed truth, that Jesus came, *in every sense*, not to destroy, but to fulfil!

It is because the same worship which begins on earth is continued in Heaven, that John declares, that none can join in the worship there who have not begun here. When he gazed into Heaven and heard the song of the worshippers before the Lamb, “they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and before the elders: and *no man could learn that song* but the hundred and forty and four thousand, *which were redeemed from the earth.*” “These,” he says, “were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb.” According to this, they only worship in Heaven who have learned to worship on earth; the song in Heaven is a continuation of the song of the saints which they sang here in honor of the Lamb.

The Saviour alludes to the same idea of the identity of earthly and heavenly worship when he says, in reference to the solemn celebration of the Communion in the last supper: “I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.” Matt. xxvi. 29. We need not, for our present purpose, insist that this shall *literally* take place in Heaven. We may regard the language as figurative, but we must beware of the folly of supposing that it is a figure which means nothing. If it is not such a communion in form, it must be in substance and in

spirit. "He surely pointed forward to some scene of holy joy from which they might point back to that sacramental feast, and recognize the unity of the cup on earth with the cup above." Should we even take the ground, as some have done, that the phrase, "my Father's kingdom," refers to His church on earth as fully established afterwards by the advent of the Spirit, and that therefore this "drinking" took place with His disciples after His resurrection, (Acts x. 41,) still such a communion with them in His resurrection state would show that it is a service in which saints in the flesh and saints risen *can* mingle.

It is easy, and we may say it is fashionable, to set such passages of Scripture aside with the vague idea "figurative," "spiritual"; but, as already suggested, let us seriously inquire whether the figure must not necessarily stand for that which is more deep and real than the figure itself. Farther, to speak of that which concerns the salvation of the whole man, soul and body, or our fellowship with an incarnate Saviour and embodied saints, as purely spiritual, is a mere evasion, and a darkening of counsel with words without knowledge. It has yet to be shown that there is any such thing as a purely spiritual communion of embodied saints—as all grant the saints in the resurrection state are—with an incarnate Saviour. He has taken the form of a man that he might hold intercourse with man; and he has instituted media of communion with him that are tangible to our outward being. The fact that we have as our High Priest the Son of God—God in the incarnate form—who "can be touched with the feeling of our infirmity," is held out as our

encouragement to "come boldly unto the throne of grace." The zealous crusade which is made against matter and form, and the meaningless cant about spirit, reminds one of that ancient dualistic philosophy which considered matter necessarily evil and spirit necessarily good, and that salvation consists entirely in getting for ever free from matter. To such the highest idea of felicity of which they can dream would be to obtain an answer to the poet's prayer —

"Oh, that I were
The viewless spirit of a lovely sound,
A living voice, a breathing harmony,
A bodiless enjoyment — born and dying
With the blest tone that made me!"

This, however, is not the salvation of the Scriptures. It promises no such phantom state to the saints after death. There is nothing hid that shall not be revealed — there is no spirit that does not take a form — there is nothing inward that does not become complete in the outward. Even our emotions take form in sighs, our desires in expressions of the countenance, our thoughts in words, and our gratitude in acts of obedience and worship. It has not yet been shown, neither can it be shown, for it is both against reason and Scripture, that the worship of Heaven, in the resurrection state, will not express itself in outward form.

In this view of the nature of heavenly worship, the passage upon which we have been commenting becomes plain at once. It will teach that the blessed Eucharistic communion of the Lord — that mystery in which all worship centres — will in some sense, and in some form, continue in Heaven. It may change its form,

as it was changed when this sacrament passed from the Old Testament Passover into the New Testament Eucharist, and assume a form suited to that higher order of worship, and thus continue a medium of communion between the saints and their incarnate God. Why should it not remain? Will it not be proper, and worthy of the dignity of the saints in Heaven, to continue to commemorate the death of Jesus—that greatest of events known in the history of men and angels!

We read that the saints above do call to mind the Lamb slain, and the blood that was shed in their redemption. Rev. v. 9. Why may not this be done at stated times, and in a solemnly formal manner? Or, take this Sacrament in its higher sense of a Communion with the deep and hidden life of Deity, and where is the evidence that such communion is to be purely spiritual, through the medium of a contemplative imagination, and that it does not involve the ministry of the glorified body, and require some formal solemnity? Especially, as this communion is to be between the saints themselves, as well as between the saints and Christ.

The more any one reflects on the subject, the more clearly appears the incongruity of a pure sublimated spiritualism even in Heaven. It makes heavenly communion a mere imagination, it ignores the idea of a real kingdom and Church with a visible head and visible members, and it virtually denies the incarnation of Jesus Christ, and the resurrection of the body. If they are figures, we feel disposed to seek something behind such expressions as ‘drinking the fruit of the

vine new in our Father's kingdom,' 'eating of the hidden manna,' 'eating of the tree of life,' 'being called to the marriage supper of the Lamb,' and 'sitting down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God.'

It has been well said by Dr. Watts: "As the great God has been pleased to appoint different forms of worship to be practised by his saints and his churches under the different economies of his grace: so it is possible he may appoint peculiar forms of sacred magnificence to attend his own worship in the state of glory."

If we assume, what is treated of in another part of this work, that there will be a continued progress in divine knowledge in the future life, then we have strong reason for believing that Christ will continue his prophetic office in the midst of his saints. He, as the source of all wisdom and knowledge, will instruct them, perhaps at stated seasons, in the "manifold wisdom of God."*

* Perhaps, it may not be beyond the bounds of probability to suppose, that, at certain seasons, during a grand convocation of the redeemed, with Jesus, their exalted Head, president among them—that glorious personage may impart to them knowledge of the most exalted kind, direct their views to some bright manifestations of Deity, and deliver most interesting lectures on the works and ways of God. This would be quite accordant with his office as the "Mediator between God and man," and to his character as the "Messenger of Jehovah," and the "Revealer" of the Divine dispensations.—DR. T. DICK ON THE FUTURE STATE, p. 211.

Perhaps you will suppose there is no such service as hearing sermons, that there is no attendance upon the word of God

These instructions may have reference to the vast creations of God, to his government of all the kingdoms of holy intelligences which people his dominions, and to the dispensations of his providence, mercy, and grace. These communications may mingle, as they do on earth, with the worship of the upper sanctuary ; and be as stimulants to that praise which swells the hearts of happy spirits who bask in the light of his glorious presence. Worship involves and presupposes the discovery of excellencies in the object of worship ; and new revelations of himself and his glory would, therefore, have a direct tendency to inspire the heavenly worship to the highest intensity of holy ardor in praise and love. It would seem that some such revelations

there. But are we sure there are no such entertainments ? Are there no lectures of divine wisdom and grace given to the younger spirits there, by spirits of a more exalted station ? Or may not our Lord Jesus Christ himself be the everlasting teacher of his church ? May he not at solemn seasons summon all heaven to hear him publish some new and surprising discoveries, which have never yet been made known to the ages of nature, or of grace, and are reserved to entertain the attention, and exact the pleasure of spirits advanced in glory ? Must we learn all by the mere contemplation of Christ's person ? Does he never make use of speech to the instruction and joy of saints above ? — Does he converse with his glorious saints no more ? And surely if he speak, the saints will hear and attend.

Or it may be that our blessed Lord has some noble unknown way of communicating a long discourse, or a long train of ideas and discoveries, to millions of blessed spirits at once, without the formalities of voice and language ; and at some peculiar seasons he may thus instruct and delight his saints in Heaven.
—DR. ISAAC WATTS.

as we have now supposed, must have been made to the worshippers which John saw in his vision on Patmos, for they allude to the wonders of God's creation. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

Is there any prayer in the worship of the saints in Heaven? "Let us consider a little; what is prayer, but the desire of a created spirit in an humble manner made known to its Creator? Does not every saint above desire to know God, to love and serve Him, to be employed for His honor, and to enjoy the eternal continuance of His love and its own felicity? May not each happy spirit in Heaven exert these desires in a way of solemn address to the Divine Majesty? May not the happy soul acknowledge its dependence, in this manner, upon its Father and its God? Is there no place in the heart of a glorified saint for such humble addresses as these? May it not, under the influence of divine love, breathe out the requests of its heart, and the expressions of its zeal for the glory and kingdom of Christ? May not the church above join with the churches below in the following language, "Father, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven."*

It may be thought, that as prayer asks, and implies a sense of want, there can be no room for it in the fullness of joy and satisfaction which is promised to the saints. Let it be remembered, however, that the bare sense of dependence is prayer in its substance, and this a dependent creature must always feel.

* Dr. Watts.

Though its joy in Heaven be full, it is dependent on God for its continuance. The flower that is blooming in full perfection must continue to hang humbly upon its stem and stay, and draw its continued life from it. Besides, if there is in Heaven an increase of joy for the saints, by still more exalted manifestations of divine glory, it will be proper for them to arise toward these with a strength of holy desire which amounts to prayer.

To prayer, which is the asking for something which the praying heart itself desires, belongs also in worship, supplication, and intercession ; the first of which terms means that form of prayer which asks that evils may be averted, and the second that blessings may be granted, to those for whom prayer is made. That the saints in Heaven supplicate and intercede for those in whom they feel peculiarly interested on earth, ought not to be doubted. This is involved in the very nature of the relation of saints to each other in the church. The strong are to support the weak. Those who have surmounted the dangers and infirmities of the militant state, and are safe on the eternal eminence, must feel themselves constantly moved in interest for their brethren who are still in the valley of conflict below. We are told that charity never faileth ; it must therefore continue to be active in behalf of its object. It will be increased in zeal, as it is itself made more perfect in the holy life of Heaven ; and that blissful fruition to which it has attained will increase its anxiety that all it loves should enjoy the same blessedness.

That the saints in Heaven do affectionately remem-

ber those whom they have left behind, supplicate and intercede in their behalf, is not a matter to be inferred merely, it is plainly taught in the Scriptures.* John saw that "four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, *which are the prayers of the saints.*" That these were human sainted spirits is evident from the fact that they say, in the next verse, "For thou wast slain and hast redeemed *us* to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and people, and nation." These heavenly worshippers also speak of themselves as having been made *priests* unto God. Rev. i. 6, and v. 10. It is the office of priests not only to offer for themselves, but chiefly for others. We find also that the spirits "under the altar," who "were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held," prayed to God, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" This was a prayer; and it is plain that it was not offered out of vindictive hearts, merely to draw down judgments upon those that persecuted and slew them; it was offered rather from love and interest to those of their brethren who were exposed still to the same fate at the hands of the same wicked persecutors.

A prominent part of heavenly worship is praise and thanksgiving. Praise and thanksgiving differ from each other thus: Praise rests upon a discovery and sense of the excellences with which the sainted soul will be there confronted. Thanksgiving rests upon a

* See the Author's "Heaven ; or, the Sainted Dead," on this point.

lively recollection and sense of past gifts and favors received. It is easy to see that both these emotions of spirit must be continued in Heaven. There will be, in that happy life, ever-new discoveries of the excellencies of God, of Christ, of the Spirit, and of all the works and ways of Deity, to call forth the sublimest praise. There will be for ever the tenderest recollection of past mercies received—how could a saint forget them?—to move the heart to the deepest gratitude, and call forth the most lively thanks. Hence we find that, in the book of Revelations, praise and thanksgiving are represented as the very soul of celestial worship.

Praise is the highest act of worship, upon the principle that it is more blessed to give than to receive. Prayer asks and receives, but praise has received, and gives glory. Prayer, in a sense, terminates on the suppliant, but praise terminates on the great and glorious objects of adoration. Praise is purely benevolent; in it, the individual loses himself in the glorious excellencies of that which it worships, and in the loveliness of that which it loves. The state of the soul in praising is a state of rapture and ecstasy. It is an approach to seraphic worship. Their name signifies to *burn*, no doubt because their love has such a “vehement flame,” that they are “caught up” in rapt and trance-like adoration before the excellent glory of Him who sits upon the throne. Their language is praise: “Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.”

It is a delightful thought that, as we are one with all saints in Christ, even while we are here on earth,

our worship, at least in its substance, is one with theirs. Of the whole church our adorable Saviour is still the Prophet, Priest, and King. The whole church looks to Him in all these offices. The whole church prays, "Thy kingdom come" — it only comes to each as it comes to all. The members in the upper side of the church cannot say to those who struggle below, "We have no need of thee." They ask for our deliverance. In this sense "they without us are not perfect." Heb. xi. 40.

We look up to our brethren who have gone before us; we catch the inspiration of their worship, and stammer, as well as we can with mortal tongues, in the same song of praise. We feel, thus, what a great privilege and honor we enjoy in the church on earth. Our ideas of worship are elevated; we do no longer regard it as a means only, but as means and end. We regard the delight it affords us as the dawning joy of Heaven. We cease endeavoring to win Heaven with our worship, and we worship because we have won Heaven. We "feel in our hearts the beginning of eternal joy" — we feel, when we worship, that we are "in heavenly places in Christ," and our only concern is that God may graciously "keep us in everlasting fellowship with the church triumphant."

I love to know that not alone
I meet the battle's angry tide;
That sainted myriads from their throne
Descend to combat at my side:
Mine is no solitary choice,
See *here* the seal of saints impressed;
The prayer of millions swells my choice,
The mind of ages fills my breast.

CUNNINGHAM.

SECTION II.

SCENES IN THE HEAVENLY WORSHIP.

LIKE the publican, we stand—in the temple it is true—but still in the outer court “afar off,” and gaze with humble reverence into the holy place. We feel our unworthiness and imperfections, and cannot yet fully join in the blessed chorus of the skies, but a view of those worshippers inspires our zeal. Our faithful Saviour has not forgotten to draw for us some pictures of heavenly worship which “he sent and signified by his angel unto his servant John: who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.”

That the visions recorded in the Book of Revelations are glimpses into Heaven, is evident from the Apostle’s own words. “I looked, and behold, a door was opened in Heaven.” It is true, some of the scenes in this book are in the Church militant; but it must be remembered that the sacred writers view the church as one. John, caught up by the spirit of vision, stands above time and space, and takes in his eye the whole Church as comprehending earth and Heaven, and describes it as in a process from trials to triumphs. Now he casts his eye over the strugglings of saints on the earthly side, and now he gets a glimpse of the side already glorified. He sees the saints on high turning back in sympathy to those still on the earth; and

these are ever inspired with fresh ardor by the glory which they see before them. In his vision there is a sublime mingling of earth and Heaven—the groans, trials and longings of “the church that waiteth for him,” and the victorious shouts and thankful songs of “the church which is around him.”

In this wonderful book, we gaze as into rolling heavens. Now a storm emerges from the horizon, spreading itself in wild wrath over the sky while the earth lies dark and trembling in its shadow. Presently the storm is torn by its own violence, and its dismembered parts fly off upon their own furious mission; but ever and anon there shine, through the rents of the tempest, the glories of the serene heavens which lie far above. From beyond the rolling clouds, the fierce lightning, and stunning thunder, come the sweet trumpet notes of triumph, and the grateful strains of harpers striking up with new joy the grand chorus of the everlasting song.

John stood in lonely Patmos and gazed with reverential wonder upon this scene; shadows of gloom, or kindlings of joy, played upon his brow, according as the scene was mournful or pleasant. He testifies what he saw. “And I saw Heaven opened.” “I looked, and behold, a door was opened in Heaven.” “And the temple of God was opened in Heaven. “I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in Heaven was opened.”

From him who has had such visions of the upper sanctuary, we may certainly learn something of the services which make up the heavenly worship.

FIRST VISION.

SCENE I. A door, or vista, is opened, through which he can look into Heaven. He hears a voice as it were of a trumpet talking to him.

THE VOICE. Come up hither, and I will show you things which must be hereafter.

When John heard this voice he was immediately in the spirit.

SCENE II. He sees a throne set in Heaven—One radiant as a jasper and sardine stone sitting upon it. A rainbow like emerald spans the throne. Around it are four-and-twenty seats, on which are seated as many elders, clothed in white, and having golden crowns upon their heads. Lightnings, and thunderings, and voices proceed out of the throne. Before the throne are the seven spirits of God under the symbol of seven lamps; and spread out at its base is a pavement, like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. Round about the throne are four living ones, probably seraphs—for they had each wings, like those which Isaiah calls seraphs, and they use nearly the same language. Is. vi. These cease not night nor day to worship Him who sits upon the throne.

THE LIVING ONES. Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was and is and is to come.

RESPONSE OF TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS. (*Falling down and casting their crowns before Him that sits upon the throne.*) Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

SCENE III. He who sits upon the throne takes a

Book in his hand, sealed with seven seals. The Book contains the secret counsels of God, which are in their time to be actualized in the history and fortunes of the church on earth.

AN ANGEL. (*With a loud voice.*) Who is worthy to open the Book, and to loose the seals thereof?

No response; which causes John to weep.

ONE OF THE ELDERS. (*To John.*) Weep not: behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the Book, and to loose the seals thereof.

SCENE IV. A Lamb, as it had been slain, appears in the midst of the throne — takes the Book out of the right hand of him who sits in the throne; upon which the four living ones, and the twenty-four Elders, fall down before the Lamb, holding in their hands harps and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of the saints, and join in a new and joyful song.

THE NEW SONG. Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.

FIRST GRAND RESPONSE. (*The Living Ones, the Elders, and a countless host of Angels.*) Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.

SECOND RESPONSE. (*From all Creatures.*) Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that

sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.

THIRD RESPONSE. (*From the Living Ones.*) Amen!

The four-and-twenty Elders fall down and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever.

SCENE V. The Lamb opens the seals.

THE FOUR LIVING ONES. Come and see.

SOULS OF MARTYRS UNDER THE ALTAR. (*With a loud voice.*) How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth ?

After some dreadful manifestations, which indicate the judgments which God, in answer to the prayer of the martyrs under the altar, will send upon the persecutors of the saints, there is heard, as from afar, a voice of wailing !

THE VOICE. Mountains and rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb ; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand ?

What do we learn from this scene of heavenly worship ?

1. That the different orders of angels, and other living creatures, join with the saints in the same worship. This would indicate that they are all, in some way now unknown to us, interested in that mystery of redemption which is ever new in Heaven, and around which all its worship seems to cluster.

2. The worship of Heaven seems to be responsive. Sometimes angels respond to saints, and sometimes saints to angels. At times one is answered by many, and again many by one. Who can imagine the sub-

limity of such a scene of heavenly worship? What a liturgy is that in which the hosts on high express their feelings of praise and love!

In the temple worship of old, which was a service "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things," they sung by responsive courses. We have examples of this in many of those psalms which were used in the temple service. As, for instance, in the twenty-fourth Psalm:

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in.

Who is this King of Glory?

The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of Glory shall come in.

Who is this King of Glory?

The Lord of Hosts, he is the King of Glory. Selah.

Who has not felt the mutual animation which is infused into the hearts of worshippers by spirited responses? How soul-inspiring must be those grand responses in the upper sanctuary, when myriads answer myriads in strains of exaltation and praise such as become the perfect worship of the true God!

3. There are reverent bendings and prostrations before the throne. This does not only manifest that humility is a deep element in the heavenly worship; but it also shows that it is not purely spiritual, as some seem to imagine, but involves the ministry of the

body — the devout emotions of the soul express themselves through the body.

4. Music constitutes part of the heavenly worship ; and this seems not to be confined to vocal music, but includes also the use of instruments. Let those who take the frequent allusion to harps as only figurative, show reason why they do so. If there is a fitness in the heavenly place for the use of the voice in making music, what should hinder it from being a fit place for “ harpers harping with their harps ? ” Music is heavenly even here on the earth, where it is produced by poor stammering mortal tongues ; what must it be when it rolls its rich strains from immortal tongues ! What delightful tenderness of feeling, what soothing and peaceful effects upon the heart, what soaring raptures of spirit, it must produce ! *

The heavenly worshippers, whether saints or angels, are spectators of the progress of God’s gracious designs in the history of the church on earth, as they are unfolded under the supervision of the God-man, who presides over the mediatorial kingdom. Every develop-

* Since the above was written we have met with the following just remarks in “The Last Enemy,” by George Burgess, D.D., pp. 328, 329 : — “It is hard to avoid believing that the charm of consecrated music, so subtle, so spiritual, so linked from the beginning and in its very nature, with worship and praise, and so mingled with the loftiest descriptions of the occupations of Heaven, is really to be there prolonged. Of Heaven an excellent writer has said, that we only know two things, which are there, holy love and holy music ; and another has remarked that, ‘it may be boldly assumed that nothing in the whole compass of nature bears so near a resemblance as music to the celestial mode of thanksgiving.’ ”

ment that is made in the church favorable to the saints, gives occasion for some expression of wonder, joy, or praise, to those who are already in Heaven. Such is the sympathy between the church on earth and in Heaven that the triumphs of the saints here are celebrated with joy yonder. The book which the Lamb took contained the sealed history of the church on earth, and the flood of joy, thanksgiving, and praise, which flowed forth from the hearts of the heavenly worshippers, was occasioned by the declaration of the Elder that the Lamb would open it. John wept when none appeared to succeed in opening it; but all heaven rejoiced when his grief was removed by the Lion of the tribe of Judah who prevailed to open the book. This exhibits the interest which saints in Heaven feel in saints on earth.

6. The worship of the saints in Heaven consists, in part, in making intercession for their brethren who are still in the struggle with sin and sinners on earth. This has already been noticed in the preceding section. It may, however, yet be remarked that the intercessions of the saints in Heaven are heard, and in due time answered in the deliverance of the saints on earth from the furnace kindled by their persecutors. God appeared in behalf of those for whom the martyrs under the altar interceded, while their enemies cried for rocks and mountains to fall upon them and hide them from the wrath which was about to bring them and their works to confusion.

SECOND VISION.

This vision includes Heaven and earth in one view.

The scene is at first laid on the earth, but soon glides into Heaven.

SCENE I. This is on earth. Four angels are standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds, which represent the dire judgments of God which they were to let loose at the proper time. An angel flying from the east, with commission to stay the execution of wrath upon the earth, until those who are his servants should be distinguished from those marked for destruction, that they might be secured from exposure, as the contents of a letter are secured by a seal. As soon as the sealing of the number of the saints was over, the scene is immediately transferred into Heaven.

SCENE II. A great multitude, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stand before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palms in their hands.

CHORUS OF SAINTS. (*With a loud voice.*) Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

CHORUS OF ANGELS. (*Falling upon their faces before the throne.*) Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

AN ELDER. (*To John.*) What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

JOHN. Sir, thou knowest.

AN ELDER. These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him

day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

This vision affords us rich lessons:—

1. The heavenly worshippers not only rejoice at the favor which God bestows upon those still on earth, but their hearts are kindled into new love and praise towards Him from whom these favors come. Here there was a great triumph in the church; the saints were delivered from threatening evils, and were sealed as the favorites of God. Four mighty angels held the winds of persecution that they should not hurt them, while another angel secured them, as with a seal, unto God and their final reward. This event was celebrated in heaven in a public occasion of worship, in which saints and angels joined.

2. This worship was triumphal and joyous. They were clothed in white robes, the symbol of innocence and holy joy; and they had palms in their hands, which speak of conflicts ended in glorious victory. The battles with Satan and sin are now over. The perils are passed. The soldiers of the king have returned to the land of peace. What a joyful sense of safety must pervade the heart when once housed in Heaven, where there is only left a remembrance of distant dangers passed! Then can they sing: “And now shall my head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle

sacrifices of joy: I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord."

3. This was also a worship of humble reverence, on account of the great mystery of God's mercy, as displayed in the salvation of so many souls. The angels fell upon their faces, in deep humility, before the throne. These "principalities and powers in heavenly places," were beginning to learn "what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God." Behold, they gaze, and wonder, fall down, and adore!

4. The heavenly worshippers retain those peculiarities which distinguished them on earth, to a sufficient degree to make recognition possible. They bore the distinctive characteristics of the "nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues," out of which they had been redeemed. One as saints; one in their holiness and joy; but distinct and various as individuals. Those happy worshippers do not stand like statues, formed in one mould, but as living beings, exhibiting, both in their characters and worship, an endless variety in the deepest unity.

5. In the heavenly worship the older saints incite the newly arrived to a holy curiosity. John, filled with humble reverence, seems not to have known whether it was proper for him to ask questions in regard to the sublime worship which he had just witnessed. Hence the Elder, in order to open the way for those communications which he desired to make, asks him, "What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" John answers by an expression — "Sir, thou knowest" — which means as much as,

"*You* are able to inform me, and I am anxious to know." Whereupon the Elder enters upon a beautiful explanation of the nature of the joy and worship of the saints. Such pleasing and instructive communications from one to the other will always mingle, as interludes in the worship of Heaven.

6. The worship of Heaven seems to be a constant worship. They "serve Him day and night in His temple." Sublime services are no doubt constantly in progress, though there may be at times extraordinary solemn convocations, when the worship rises, as in the cases before us, to special intensity and grandeur. There may be a reference to such seasons of special magnificence in the allusion of Job to "a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord." Job ii. 1. There is no conclusive reason to think that that scene is not laid in Heaven. If we even say that it is allegorical, it must nevertheless point to a truth.

THIRD VISION.

On another occasion, when the church had gained a glorious triumph — it seems to refer to the final glorious Millennial triumph — Heaven was moved in worship thus :

GREAT VOICES IN HEAVEN.—The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever.

RESPONSE OF ELDERS. (*Falling upon their faces.*) —We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken unto thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth."

1. There is here again new joy in Heaven over the glorious fortune of the saints in the church militant. This is certainly an idea doubly consoling; first, it is pleasant to think that those who are gone before us, and who now worship with the saints in light, continue to feel such an interest in us; and secondly, to think that when we cross into that within the vail, we shall continue to bear those we leave behind upon our hearts, and feel that their successes increase our own happiness. As "*there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth,*" so there is also joy there over every triumph which the struggling saints obtain over their enemies.

2. In the heavenly worship there is such an entire oneness with God, that the saints manifest the same holy hatred against sin as He does; and, consequently, they rejoice with God in the downfall of the wicked. It swells their hearts with emotions of bliss when they see God "*take his great power,*" and vindicate His character against His enemies. They rejoice and give thanks, not only in view of His mercy, but also in view of his justice. This height of sympathy with God we attain not in this world; because our selfishness and narrow conceptions cause us to be partial, and take more comfort in some of his attributes than in others. In Heaven we shall know also how to

praise His “glorious justice.” This truth is farther exemplified in the

FOURTH VISION.

When Satan and his angels were cast down from that station of influence which they had occupied in the church, John heard

A LOUD VOICE IN HEAVEN: Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of all our brethren is cast down which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Wo to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

“The phrase, ‘our brethren,’ shows by whom this song is celebrated.” The “voice” was the one united voice of all the redeemed saints in Heaven, “whose brethren were still suffering persecution and trial on the earth. It shows the tenderness of the tie which unites all the redeemed as brethren, whether on earth or in Heaven; and it shows the interest which they ‘who have passed the flood’ have in the trials, the sorrows, and the triumphs of those who are still upon earth.”*

FIFTH VISION.

The Lamb on Mount Zion, surrounded by the one hundred and fifty-four thousand that He saw sealed in

* Barnes.

a previous vision. A loud voice, like many waters, and like great thunder. Music from harpers. A new song, sung by the redeemed. An angel, having a commission to preach the everlasting gospel to those that dwell on the earth, flying through the midst of Heaven.

THE ANGEL.—Fear God and give glory to Him ; for the hour of His judgment is come : and worship Him that made Heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

ANOTHER ANGEL.—Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornications.

A THIRD ANGEL.—If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive the mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation ; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb : and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever : and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints : here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

A VOICE FROM HEAVEN.—Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth : Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors ; and their works do follow them.

A FOURTH ANGEL. (*Addressing the Son of Man, sitting upon a white cloud, having a golden crown*

upon His head, and a sharp sickle in His hand.) Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe.

Here we see how the bosoms of those in the church above swell with the joy of the new song at the progress of the gospel of salvation on earth. God displays His glorious justice in the overthrowing of adverse powers, at which the heavenly worshippers rejoice. Those that fall away in the fiery trial meet the doom of the enemies of God; and those who keep the faith of Jesus in persecution and death, die in the Lord and rest from their labors! At length the earth is gathered, as men gather the harvest:

Time gone, the righteous saved, the wicked damned,
And God's eternal government approved :

Of all this the celestial assembly are spectators. In all of it they see new light reflected upon the wondrous attributes and ways of God and the Lamb; and, while their souls admire and adore, their tongues break out in new strains of thanksgiving and praise.

SIXTH VISION.

Seven angels having the seven last plagues of the wrath of God. A sea of glass mingled with fire, on which stand the victorious saints, having the harps of God. Filled with the triumphant joy of the final victory, they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb.

THE SEVEN ANGELS.—Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints. Who shall not fear thee,

O Lord, and glorify thy name ? for thou only art holy : for all nations shall come and worship before thee ; for thy judgments are made manifest.

The heavenly tabernacle is opened. The seven angels having the seven last plagues come out, clothed in pure white linen, with golden girdles round their breasts. One of the four Living Ones gives to the angels seven golden vials filled with the wrath of God. The temple is filled with smoke from the glory and power of God, so that no one could enter it, till the wrath of God was past. A voice is heard out of the temple speaking to the seven angels.

THE VOICE.—Go your ways and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.

Three angels pour out their vials.

AN ANGEL.—Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of the saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink ; for they are worthy.

ANOTHER ANGEL OUT OF THE ALTAR.—Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.

The rest of the angels pour out their vials.

A GREAT VOICE OUT OF THE TEMPLE.—It is done !

In this vision we have the fact already alluded to, again brought to light, that the heavenly worshippers are inspired to new worship at the exhibitions of God's judgments towards the finally impenitent. They rejoice in *all* the divine attributes. In His judgments they see His faithfulness and truth ; and in the destruction of His and their enemies, they see His

justice, and their eternal safety. "Thou art righteous because thou hast judged thus." It is, as before remarked, our selfishness, and our inability of fully sympathizing with the Divine mind, which hinders us from taking the same pleasure in His justice as we do in His mercy. In Heaven this will not be so. There we will be like Him; and therefore we will share with Him in the joy which a holy being must always feel at the overthrow of sin and sinners. The same spirit which enabled David to pray for the destruction of the enemies of God, possessed in Heaven in a higher degree, will enable the saints to tune their harps to a loftier song, when God shall confound and bring to shame the wrath of those that "have shed the blood of the saints and prophets." This is made still more manifest in the

SEVENTH VISION.

Now comes the final triumph. The last battle has been fought. Heaven celebrates the victory. Desolation reigns in the tents of the wicked! In Heaven there is a great VOICE OF MUCH PEOPLE. Alleluia: Salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hands.

THEY REPEAT. Alleluia.

And her smoke rose up for ever and ever!

RESPONSE OF THE LIVING ONES AND TWENTY-FOUR ELDERS. (*Falling down before God who sitteth upon the throne.*) Amen; Alleluia.

A VOICE OUT OF THE THRONE. Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

A GREAT MULTITUDE. Alleluia: for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

THE MESSENGER. (*To John.*) Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.

THE SAME. These are the true sayings of God.

How strikingly does this vision exhibit the interest which the church triumphant feels in the church militant! They rejoice and praise the Lord at the overthrow of the wicked, and at his appearing in power to avenge the blood of the martyr-saints. They call upon each other, and animate each other's praise, in view of the home-bringing of the Church—the Bride, the Lamb's wife. It seems that a spirit of ardent longing for such a consummation had ever pervaded their worship, and now, as their hopes are about to be changed into fruition, their joy breaks out into a rapturous and triumphant song. “Let us be glad and rejoice: and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.”

SECTION III.

PRACTICAL REFLECTIONS ON THE HEAVENLY WORSHIP.

An ever-changing influence upon me—like a presence of awe one minute, and another minute, like a joy melting into tears ; and there again, it was as though my soul felt itself whispered to by the breezes, “Come, let us away into the heavens, and worship together.”

MOUNTFORD'S EUTHANASY.

If we properly consider this subject of heavenly worship, it becomes warmly and animatingly practical to us. Whenever we so stir up our faith in the future life that we “see Heaven opened,” and feel its glory stream down upon us, like the genial light of an eternal morning, it ought to exert such an influence upon us as will make us better. Devout meditation upon any feature of heavenly felicity cannot but be practical. What then saith this vision of heavenly worship to our hearts ?

First of all : We cannot contemplate the worship of Heaven without feeling, more deeply than before, the great benefit which must result from the duty and privilege of worship here on the earth. If the worship of the church in Heaven is the continuation and perfection of the worship of the church here, then how important is the connection between our worship here and yonder ! The connection is like that of seeding and harvesting. It is our devotional exercises here which gives to the soul that holy habit which will make it natural to us to join in the worship of that blissful place. In this respect, as in every other,

" whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." We learn that when the harpers in Heaven sung a new song none could learn it but those who had been redeemed from the earth. Life makes no sudden and violent transitions; when it does change circumstances, it still flows on by the momentum of its own previous motion, so that the tide of holy worship in which it flowed till death will emerge through the change of dissolution, and still flow on in Heaven. But what if the spirit here acquires no such worshipping habit? What if it be not here imbued with a holy delight in the worship of God? What will they do in Heaven, to whom worshipping never appeared as a delightful privilege, but only as a heavy duty, to which nothing but the lashes of conscience, or the fear of consequences, could drive them? What will they do where they "cease not day nor night," to whom the brief services of the sanctuary were irksome, and who longed for their close as a slave longs for the going down of the sun? Alas! can they ever hope to enter that temple, where they would be so manifestly out of place, and to join in that worship where no congeniality with their previous habits is found, and where they would seem to themselves and others like the man who appeared among the guests at the marriage feast and had not on a wedding garment?

Let those who feel not the sanctuary and its worship to be the home and joy of their souls, lay these considerations to heart. What will a child do in a school of advanced scholars, when it has never learned its letters, nor been practised in the initiatory rudiments of learning? With infinitely more solemnity and force

may the question be asked, what will dull and untaught souls do, amid the worshipping throng of sainted spirits, who have only after long and ardent training been advanced from the stammering preludes of earthly worship into the full choir of those who, in answer to angels, pronounce the grand responses of that liturgy which the Heaven of heavens bends down to hear? The fact that they feel unfit to engage in such worship is a good proof that they are unfit for that place!

But again: May we not also remind those to whom worship is the highest joy, but who are often called away from worship by other cares and claims, of the consoling fact that the heavenly worship is unbroken by the thousand interruptions which here afflict the spirit? Here on earth man is doomed to toil for the body and for time; and much of his life is taken up in labors and cares. It is only at intervals that he can engage in direct acts of worship. His evening devotions are cut off by the drowsy night; but "there is no night there." His morning devotions are interrupted by waiting labor; but there "they rest from their labor." The sweet devotional hours of the Sabbath close with the approaching toils of another week, but

"There congregations ne'er break up,
And Sabbaths have no end!"

Though a truly devotional spirit will endeavor to make life a constant scene of worship, yet there will be profane intrusions which will, more or less, distress the devout spirit with a painful sense of its own imperfections, and that of the world in which it has its present being. In Heaven there will not remain anything of

the curse in the form of toil as it is here, and consequently there will be there no difference between acts of devotion and ordinary employments. Nothing will be secular there. Not only the exercises of stated seasons, but celestial employments and pastimes will be worship. The ordinary flow of heavenly life will be one constant scene of worship. In this sense, "they serve him day and night in his temple." In this sense, there is "no temple therein"; for all space there is temple. All places are perfumed with the incense of joyful worship, and pervaded with indescribable peace. All the activities of the perfected spirit, and of the glorified body, are worship. All that life is love, and all that love is worship.

Oh, happy day! Oh, rapturous state! where nothing is secular. Where no cares, as fruits of the curse, shall interrupt the spirit which would pour itself as one constant libation at the feet of the Lamb. Oh! blissful world of the saints! where all is holy peace, and all holy time, even one eternal Sabbath, where

No morrow's quick returning light
Shall call us to the world again.

Besides these interruptions, the worshipper here is also often afflicted by distractions of mind. How often does he, even in the midst of his devotions, mourn over a divided heart! His thoughts wander; and, though the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak; and when he would do good, then evil is present with him. Oh! the cares of this life,

How they divide our wav'ring minds,
And leave but half for God!

"When that which is perfect is come," all these distresses which attach to this life of imperfection will be done away. He who has best considered how short a time we are able, in the most solemn acts of worship, to fix our whole heart undividedly upon God, will best conceive what a bliss it must be to worship where all distractions have for ever ceased. The very prospect of so high a privilege is inspiring. The hope of soon engaging in a service so pure, so free from the alloy of sense and sin, in a wonderful manner animates our worship. The blessed perfection of what is so near, helps us, in the struggle of faith and hope, to rise out of the profane entanglements which afflict us here.

How often, too, in this world, do the hearts of cold and dull worshippers intervene, in the communion of saints, to chill the devotions of the sanctuary! How much sweeter and more replete with unction, even here on earth, is the worship of a band where all hearts are on fire with heavenly love and worship; where, in all the assembly, no cold and careless countenance meets ours, to check its ardor, and where no dull, dragging voice hangs with leaden weight upon our aspirations of praise! In Heaven, this unpleasantness and disadvantage of mixed assemblies will not be known. All will be one: all will worship; and "as united fires brighten each other's blaze, as many accordant sounds make the finer harmony, so the unison of many hearts in divine worship, makes the higher spiritual melody, not only more grateful to God, but more delightful to the saints." The devotions of one will inspire the other; "and, as each mingling flame increases each," their worship will rise in united and delightful ardor to

God. There rise, without distraction or division, the united devotions of myriads of pure and fervent hearts. There mingle the grateful songs of an almost infinite number of ransomed spirits, all infinitely blest. They worship without distinction, and are happy without end.

O, may we rise by grace divine,
To those bright courts on high ;
Then shall our happy spirits join
The chorus of the sky.

We have already intimated that the hope of soon entering that sanctuary and joining in that worship should animate us in our present devotions. This thought deserves a few more reflections.

Does it not create joy in our hearts to think and know that joy is near? How soon may we be introduced into that sainted and angelic company! It is but a thin veil which now shuts us out!—yea, a half-transparent veil, behind which the eye of faith sees the solemn movements of the worshippers to and fro—a veil tremulous with the breath of heavenly songs, filling the hearts of waiting worshippers on this side with the sweet vibrations of sympathetic bliss. We catch the spirit of their worship; and, in moments of elevated faith, almost forget our captivity, and attempt, though feebly, to hum after them the easiest strains of the heavenly song.

We speak of rising to the high argument of their worship, as if that were the only way in which unison with them in their worship were possible. Must we rise to them?—cannot they stoop down to us? Did celestial voices never undulate in the air of earth? Do

angelic and sainted beings never join the assemblies of the Church below? Do they never bend in upon a band of worshippers, with faces silent and solemn, and forms only a little more ethereal than air!

It is evening. In yonder sequestered room, "where prayer is wont to be made," is assembled a company of devout Christians. The follies and sins, the din and bustle of busy streets, are heard only faintly and from afar. All is solemn quietude within, and the very air seems holy. Look over the assembly, forgetting their bodies, and it will be seen that their hearts are altars of incense. God is there! "He that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." Jesus is there! "Where two or three are gathered together there am I in the midst of them!" The Holy Spirit is there! "He shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever!" Are there any disembodied saints, and any angels there? See! the Pastor arises, opens the Bible, and reads to that worshipping assembly of saints: "Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." Heb. xii. 22-23.

He addresses them thus: How solemn is this place! This is the house of God. This is the gate of Heaven. Here angels and spirits of saints made perfect are present; for ye are come to these, says the text. Think this not strange, my beloved. Once when Daniel was praying, "while he was speaking in prayer,

even the man Gabriel, being caused to fly swiftly, touched him about the time of the evening oblation." If one angel could come to Daniel in prayer, could not "an innumerable company of angels" come into this assembly of worship? You are come to them—they are come to you!

The Apostle exhorts the Corinthian Christians to observe strict decorum in their assemblies "because of the angels." Just as we are more reverent and guarded in our conduct and words in the presence of superiors, so ought we to remember, in our worshipping assemblies, that higher spirits are there, and act under the feeling that they are present. The best critics draw this meaning from this passage, and it is by far the most natural sense.*

If this evening there is one unregenerate person present, and he shall repent, there will be "joy in Heaven in the presence of the angels." Why will there be joy there? Will it not be because some one of the unseen visitors to this assembly from the heavenly place has borne the news thither?

The Apostle says of the angels: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" † If angels are unem-

* The woman ought to act decently in church, and therefore to be covered, because of the angels, who are present in the assemblies of the saints; it being the opinion both of Jews and Christians that the ministering angels are there present.

PATRICK LOWTH, &c. COM. IN LOCO.

† This passage has reference directly to ministering acts of angels to the heirs of salvation *during, or in, their religious services* and devotions, consequently to their presence in worshipping assemblies. This is more clear from the original

bodied beings, or, which is more scriptural, endowed with bodies of a very refined and ethereal texture, what should hinder us from believing in their silent invisible presence? What should hinder us from believing that they descend to join our worship, as we attempt to rise to theirs? If they visit the earth at all, and minister to the saints, where more reasonably might we expect their presence than in the assemblies of the saints, where the triune God is worshipped, where Heaven kisses the earth, where there are "heavenly places in Christ," where many hearts in unison are engaged in that worship which is preparatory to that of the Church above, and where, as the Scriptures plainly declare, "we come to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, and to the spirits of just men made perfect"?

Thus Heaven comes down our souls to greet,
And glory crowns the mercy-seat.

than appears in the common translation. The word translated "ministering" is *λειτουργία*, which means, in ecclesiastical writers, "a *public* function in the religious ministry; the discharge of a public religious duty." Scott says it means: "Filling the office of priesthood, or magistracy, or other important service, connected with religion or religious worship." It is the word from which our English word Liturgy is derived. They are spirits, then, who enter, with their ministering helps, in warm, felt, spiritual unison and animating response, into the worship and services of the heirs of salvation.—The other word "minister" is, in the original, *διάκονια*, which designates an office consonant with the above, and lends its aid in fixing upon the word *λειτουργία* the sense above attributed to it.

If these celestial visitors thus come to our assemblies, is it as idle spectators—or is it not rather for the double purpose, of animating our worship, and of joining in it? If evil spirits have the power of thrusting themselves in, with a view of corrupting the purity of our service, by injecting improper thoughts, inspiring improper feelings, and distracting the intensity of our devotions, why may not pure spirits have a similar access to assembled hearts, for the high and holy purpose of making the place heavenly, and giving to our worship a spiritual character? Yes, they are here! How practical is this thought! How animating is this reflection! How delightful and soul-inspiring is this assurance!

So saying, the Pastor took the Hymn-book and read :

Come, let us join our cheerful songs
With angels round the throne!

They all sung solemnly, humbly, joyfully; and each one felt that there was a depth of sublime and holy meaning in that couplet which they had never seen or felt before. Every heart bowed and worshipped in humble reverence, as if it were before the throne in Heaven, “because of the angels”!

I must be permitted, in conclusion, to present a beautiful incident, which will be found not irrelevant, and which may serve to throw light upon several passages of Scripture that bear incidentally upon the subject before us.

A number of devout persons in a certain seaport town fell upon the pious idea of furnishing religious privileges to the sailors and other laborers along the

wharf. They fitted up a room, consecrated it to that purpose, and employed a Minister to preach, and conduct divine worship there. This Pastor was a learned and pious man. He commenced his labors of love; but only a few of those for whom he preached came to his service. He continued for some time with courage, in the hope that his audience would increase. Still it remained small. "Fit audience" even he had not, as the poet desired, though he had "few." His heart became gradually more and more discouraged, every time he returned to his chapel and found that his audience was still the same little company. At length he began to think that his time and strength were almost as good as wasted there. He thought of how much wider the circle of his influence might be in some other field of labor, and he began seriously to meditate on the propriety of throwing up his small charge in order to seek a wider sphere of usefulness.

One evening, in twilight's meditative hour, he sat in his study, his thoughts busily engaged upon the subject of resigning his charge, and of recommending, to those benevolent persons who had employed him, the abandonment of their well-meant but useless enterprise. His heart alternated between hope and discouragement. Now his affection for the small company that attended his services shed a momentary ray of encouragement upon his heart, and now again the fact of the fewness of their number, and no increase, passed like a dark shadow over his soul. Whether, as in the case of the sorrowing disciples, his troubles mercifully overcame the keen anguish of his waking thoughts, so that he "slept for sorrow," and sleeping

dreamed, or whether it was some deep scriptural truth that welled up from the depths of his introverted spirit and embodied itself in shape and form before him—whether this, or that, or something else still, who knows?—he saw, or thought he saw, a form of saintly or angelic loveliness enter his study door, and placing itself in friendly attitude before him.

“What casteth thee down, and troubleth thy spirit?” said the mild visitor before him.

There was an approachable openness in the appearance and mien of this visitor, which encouraged the disconsolate Pastor to enter into conversation with him upon the subject of his troubles. So he felt freedom to reply,

“All hail, kind friend! thy question and thy countenance promise relief, and I will tell thee the source of my sadness. My soul is weary and discouraged in my chapel by the sea, because so few come to my services.”

“Thou art in error, because thou seest only with mortal eyes; and thou art cast down without cause. THERE ARE MORE THAT HEAR THEE, AND JOIN IN THY WORSHIP, THAN THOU SEEST, OR KNOWEST OF! I, and those that are with me, are among thy auditors, and give unheard response to thy prayers!”

“How, my lord?” said the earnest Pastor.

At this the mysterious visitor handed him an open book, with his finger directed to a passage, and said: “How readest thou?”

The Pastor took the book and read: “Fear not; for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I

pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.” (2 Kings vi. 16, 17.)

“What meaneth this?” enquired the Pastor, with evident surprise.

“Art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not—but, nay, it is not my mission to reprove thee. It means,” said the messenger, “that when the servant of the prophet looked with his natural eyes, he saw only the horses and chariots of the Syrians which had come to take Elisha, lying encamped around Dothan, and he was discouraged and afraid; but when the Lord opened his eyes, and gave him the capacity of spiritual sight, he saw that the mountains and hills around Dothan were also covered with an unseen army—with ‘horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.’ You need but the same gift of spiritual sight, to enable you to see that there are more in your small assembly than the few flesh-embodied sailors which thou seest with bodily eyes!”

“My heart beats with joyful surprise!”

“Read again,” said the visitor—and he gave him the open book the second time.

The Pastor read: “Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the

church the manifold wisdom of God." (Eph. iii. 8, 9, 10.)

"I feel again to ask, what meaneth this Scripture?" said the Pastor, "and yet there openeth itself to me, from it, what seems a mighty sense!"

"Hast thou now the key? — It means," continued the visitor, "that the holy Apostle had 'knowledge in the mystery of Christ,' 'which from the beginning of the world had been hid in God'; and that one of the designs which God had in view in making known to him and 'to all men what is the fellowship of this mystery,' was to reveal unto 'principalities and powers in heavenly places, *by the church*, the manifold wisdom of God.' In other words, the various orders of the heavenly world are to learn, from the church, mysteries of wisdom, which they knew not of before!"

"My heart trembles with holy awe at the magnitude of my office!"

"Read once more," said the visitor, opening the book for him the third time.

The Pastor read: "Which things the angels desire to look into." (1 Pet. i. 12.)

"There fall, as it were, scales from my eyes," said the astonished Pastor. "Yet, kind visitor, permit me once more to ask your explanation of this passage, the meaning of which, I now see plainly, I never fully understood."

"It means, that the glorious plan of salvation, into which 'the prophets have inquired and searched diligently,' not themselves understanding fully the deep meaning of their own prophecies concerning it — that this wondrous plan is a subject of study among angels

and other heavenly orders — that they, like the prophets, do not as yet fully understand its depths, but have a desire to look still more deeply into it. You, oh! you, dear Pastor, understand more of it than prophets did, and more than angels do ; for they cannot know its richness by experience, the only way that it can be known fully.

They never sunk so low,
They are not raised so high;
They never knew such depths of wo,
Such heights of majesty !

Be not surprised, therefore, when I tell you, that when you come into your little church of sailors, you come also ‘to an innumerable company of angels,’ who encamp there, unseen by fleshly eyes, as they once did upon the hills of Dothan, and desire to look into that fellowship of mystery which you are making known, in such plain and simple power, and with such holy unction of experience, to those few sailors in the chapel by the sea ! Be assured, then, that *there are more that hear thee, and join in thy worship, than thou seest, or knowest of !* ’

“I magnify mine office !” exclaimed the Pastor, in holy astonishment and joy. The thrill of his own happy feelings roused him from his reverie, or slumber, and brought him to himself again.

The visitor had fled ! The impression remained. The instructor was himself instructed, by “one like unto the Son of Man !”

The next Sabbath, he went again to his sailor-chapel, with an humble, tender, and encouraged heart. It seemed to him that the place was more solemn than

before, and his soul was filled with the awful and glorious sense of what he had learned in the vision. He conducted the service with a solemn recognition of what he now felt to be his invisible auditors, opening with the hymn,

Come, let us join our cheerful songs
With angels' round the throne !

THE WORSHIP OF HEAVEN.

O for a sweet inspiring ray,
To animate our feeble strains,
From the bright realms of endless day,
The blissful realms where Jesus reigns !

There, low before his glorious throne,
Adoring saints and angels fall ;
And, with delightful worship, own
His smile their bliss, their heav'n, their all.

Immortal glories crown his head,
While tuneful hallelujahs rise,
And love, and joy, and triumph, spread
Through all th' assemblies of the skies.

He smiles, and seraphs tune their songs
To boundless rapture while they gaze ;
Ten thousand thousand joyful tongues
Resound his everlasting praise.

There all the fav'rites of the Lamb
Shall join at last the heav'nly choir ;
O, may the joy-inspiring theme
Awake our faith and warm desire !

Dear Saviour ! let thy Spirit seal
Our interest in that blissful place,
Till death remove this mortal veil,
And we behold thy lovely face.

CHAPTER XIII.

Infants in Heaven.

I reached home safely, and found my garden in the full splendor of this lovely month—this “kiss which Heaven gives to earth.” But in every corner of my garden, under every tree, and before every flower, there rises before me the suffering form of my dear departed William, whose young life has been a most lovely May-day, one of Heaven’s sweetest kisses to an undeserving parent. But his mild smiling day ended with a most distressing scene of martyrdom, that he might be perfected through suffering. O how I sometimes long to see the little angel in his celestial glory, among the infant martyrs of Bethlehem, a never-fading flower in the Paradise of God!

FROM A LETTER OF REV. DR. SCHAFF TO THE AUTHOR. DATED
MAY 16, 1853.

ONE half the human race die as infants! By far the greater part of these do not live to be one year old.

Infants are the most interesting portion of every family; so are they also of the human family as a whole. They are lovely to contemplate in all those characteristics which belong to the opening season of human life. As the dewy morning is more beautiful than the perfect day—as the opening bud is more

lovely than the full-blown flower, so is the joyous dawn of infant life more interesting than the calm monotony of riper years.

Love for little children, and interest in them, is a beautiful virtue, and ought to be found in every Christian bosom, whether parent or not. It is seldom that we find even unsanctified human nature devoid of tender interest in bright and joyous infancy. Even Lord Byron, whose soul, in its own cold height, was like a mountain which no springtime ever reaches, and whose heart, in reference to all human love, was dry as summer dust—even this proud, selfish misanthrope, self-exiled in a distant land because he hated home and all its associations, sends back a sigh to the “cradled slumbers” of his infant daughter. Though he took delight in nothing human, but hated it all, he still thought he might take an interest in “aiding her mind’s development,” and in “watching her dawn of little joys!” He who is destitute of all interest in little children, reproaches his own mother’s love, by which his infancy was cherished, and is, by common consent, a monster.

“Three things,” says the Rev. Dr. Henry, “appear to be uninjured by the fall—the song of birds, the beauty of flowers, and the smile of infancy; for it is difficult to conceive how either of these could have been more perfect had man remained holy; as if God would leave us something to remind us of the Paradise we have lost, and to point us to that which we may regain.” Though we may not be willing to say that sin has not also mingled its discord with the songs of birds, paled the tints of the fairest flowers, and darkened the

sunny smiles of infancy: yet we may say, that as the harmony of nature is richest in the morning, and as the flower smiles in beauty on the top, before the thorns have grown hard and sharp, so sin and the curse seem to defer their bitterness to the waywardness of youth and the sorrowful years of age, while all that is lovely and holy finds expression in the happy days and joyous smiles of infancy.

Beautiful is an infant, whatever way we picture it to ourselves. Beautiful in the cradle. Beautiful upon a parent's knee. Beautiful awake or asleep. Beautiful at play, in the corner of the room, or under the shade-tree before the door. Beautiful as a lamb in the Saviour's arms. Beautiful at the font of baptism. Beautiful beneath the coffin-lid!—Yes, beautiful even there, in the loveliness of death—with hands folded peacefully—with brow like moulded wax—with eyes closed in sleep, “perchance to dream!”—with lips so gracefully composed, as if to say, “I murmur not”—and with its entire face radiant with a smile, which is the imprint of its dying vision!

If infants make up so prominent and lovely a feature in the homes of earth, what must they be in our Heavenly Home? Certainly we would overlook one grand part of the heavenly treasures and attractions, did we not devote a Chapter to Infants in Heaven.

The early church devoted a special day, once a year, the third day after Christmas, to the affectionate remembrance of those infants which were slain, in Bethlehem and the coasts thereof, by the order of Herod, with the design of slaying among them the child Jesus. This is touchingly appropriate. In answer to the

question, “Who was the first Christian martyr?” children are taught to answer, “Stephen.” Is this right? Were not the first Christian martyrs the infants of Bethlehem? They died for Jesus’ sake. Afterwards He died for them! Their blood was the first oblation to the new-born Saviour. True, the sacrifice was brought by a wicked man; but this is not the only instance in which an unholy priest made offering in the name, and in behalf of others; why may not Herod bring the blood of these infants in the name of all, as the first-fruits of the myriads on myriads of those who are taken from the earth in infancy, washed in the Saviour’s atoning blood, and received into Heaven?

Would it not be well if a warmer and more affectionate remembrance of infants in Heaven, were kept up in the church on earth? Would it not be well, early and often, to refer little children to the touching scene of infant martyrdom at Bethlehem, and, by means of it, to the Saviour who died for them, and for whom they died, as well as to that happy world, where they are crowned with their Redeemer? Yes, it would make them better—it would make us better!

We need not discuss the question whether all infants are saved. This we take here for granted. They were from first included in the promise. They were afterward included in the covenant. They were at length embraced in the Saviour’s arms—and He has Himself said, “Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.” It is beautifully said by Irenæus, “To infants He became an infant, sanctifying infants.”

They crowd around me now, the silent, solemn forms

of myriads of mourners ! Ye who have counted the stars of Heaven, and the sand of the sea, draw near, and tell the number of those Rachels in whose eyes shines, deep and lovely, the "sweet sorrow" for their infant dead ! Where is the family that is not divided — part on earth and part in Heaven ? Where is the parent that does not visit, with tears, some little mound under the willow ! Where is the parent that does not, in some lonely hour which memory loves, look up to Heaven with folded hands, and exclaim, half in joy and half in sorrow, "Can I bring him back again ? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me !"

There is no flock, however watched and tended,
But one dead lamb is there !

There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
But hath one vacant chair !

The air is full of farewells for the dying,
And mournings for the dead ;
The heart of Rachel, for her children crying,
Will not be comforted.

Such mourners need for their comfort more than the bare statement of the fact that their departed infants are saved. The affectionate parental heart, which was wont to delight in all the smallest details of interest in the object of its affections, will not now settle down in vague generalities. The sorrowing heart of a bereaved parent always muses on particulars. The poet has given true expression to such a heart.

The nursery shows thy pictured wall,
Thy bat, thy bow,
Thy cloak and bonnet, club and ball ;
BUT WHERE ART THOU ?

A corner holds thine empty chair,
Thy playthings idly scattered there,
But speak to us of our despair,
Casa Wappy !

The weeping Mary at the tomb of the Saviour asked, “tell me *where* thou hast laid him?” Sorrow asks for something more definite and particular than a general assurance. The bereaved parent asks, whither has my child gone? who cares for it? and what advantages has it attained in its new abode? Show me its happiness, and then I will dry my tears. Tell me on what particulars my thoughts may dwell when I think of my sainted babe.

Retired and modest, in the distant background of our vision of mourning Rachels, appear anxious faces, that seem almost afraid to ask in words, what they are so plainly asking by their countenances. **MAY WE STILL THINK OF OUR INFANTS, AS INFANTS IN HEAVEN?**

Why not? Is the idea of *infants* “made perfect” less lovely, or less honorable to God, than the idea of “just men made perfect?” There is something beautiful in the thought of infant spirits in our “Father’s house.” It is pleasant to think of

“Infant souls — the sweetest things of earth —
Amid the wonders of the shining thrones,
Yielding their praise in glad, but simple tones,
Of tender love beneath the Almighty’s wing.”

As we do not think of a home on earth without the loveliness of childhood mingling with its hallowed images, we will not dissociate this feature from our conceptions of the Heavenly Home, unless we are bidden so to do. We will still think of them as they left us, only all our thoughts of them shall be holy!

John, in his vision of Heaven, “saw the dead, SMALL and GREAT, stand before God.” That the terms ‘small’ and ‘great’ are not merely to be taken in the sense of eminent and obscure, but also in the sense of infants and adults, is the opinion of able divines. “It will be admitted by all,” says Dr. Cumming, of the Scotch Church, London, “that the bodies of infants will be raised at the resurrection morn. The language of Scripture is explicit — ‘I saw the dead, small and great’ (that is, *infants* and *adults*) ‘stand before God.’” There is nothing to forbid us taking the Saviour’s expression, “of *such* is the kingdom of Heaven,” in its literal sense.

As infants pass out of this world without a knowledge of that manifold wisdom which belongs to the plan of salvation, it is reasonable to believe that they will be taught it there. It is a beautiful suggestion, which some writers have made, that these infant spirits are, in Heaven, under the tuition of angels and human spirits. If they there learn what they had no time here to acquire, of which there can be no doubt, it is more natural, and most in accordance with all we know of the divine order, to suppose that it will be imparted to them in the natural way, than that it will be done by miracle. For, not only would their own happiness be increased by such a gradual opening of their minds to the dawn of holy wisdom, but it would also afford occasion of purest joy to benevolent spirits, whether angelic or human, to be thus employed. “What can afford a sweeter consolation to the bereaved bosom than the idea of deceased infants being at once received

as the *protégés* of celestial guardians, and there mustered and trained in the lessons of angelic wisdom and love? How precious the thought that these tender flowerets of hope are not so much nipped and withered by death as transplanted to a heavenly garden, there to flourish in brighter bloom, and to exhale a richer fragrance, through ages unknowing of an end!"

Shall we speak of the number of infants in Heaven? If all infants are saved, then—oh! blessed company! What a multitude, which no man can number! As the stars in the heavens above may be counted in the reflecting waters of earth, so the number of infant spirits that soar and sing on high may be known by counting their little graves in the cemeteries of earth. Count them! oh, who can count them? The largest number of hillocks are small ones!

According to the computation of Hufeland, one-half of the human race die under ten years of age. Dr. Watts says: "The yearly bills of mortality in and near London, show that more than one-third part of the race of man die before the age of two years, and nearly half, before five. And let it be remembered, lest it should be thought more die there than the usual proportion for want of air and the conveniences of life, that among the savage nations of Asia, Africa, and America, more of these young creatures perish for want of care, or of skill, in their diseases, or by the hands of their parents; so that, take all mankind together, the bills of mortality in London may furnish a pretty just calculation in the matter."

It has been computed that, at the lowest calculation, there have one hundred and forty generations lived

and died since the creation of the world. Counting each generation in an average only one-fifth as many as the present, there would have died in all twenty-eight thousands of millions. Truly,

“ All that tread
The globe, are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom.”

Considering that one-half of the race die in infancy, we have the number of fourteen thousands of millions of infants in Heaven! — a number which no imagination can grasp. Literally, “a multitude which no man can number”; for, reckoning at the fastest possible rate that any one could pronounce the numerals in counting, it would take more than five hundred years to count them! To these are added, at the rate at which infants die from our present population, more than seventeen hundred every hour: more than forty thousand every day: about five millions every year. As on all trees, there are more blossoms in spring-time than there are ripe fruits in autumn, so there are more infants than adults that drop away from the circles of earthly love. Like those flowers which grow on frail slender vines, bloom but an hour in the morning, and then fold their beauties to the heart from the gaze of earth for ever, so our infants pass quickly and beautifully away,

“ In the spirit’s young bloom,
Ere earth has profaned what was born for the skies.”

And — O, transporting thought — they are all in Heaven!

It is an enrapturing vision that dawns on our faith. See how they rejoice! Hear how they sing! Behold

how the white-robed infant multitude extends its vast and interminable lines along the city of God, till the last fade from sight in the dim distant infinitude of bliss; and at the approach of Him who blest all when He blest those in His arms, they join in the full chorus of the sky: The Lamb! The Lamb! Worthy is the Lamb that died for us!

An infant glorified. The spirit of an infant made perfect. What a complete ideal of the Beautiful! When we think of our adult beloved ones among the saints in light, there mingle with our thoughts of them, even against our own will and wishes, some shaded memories of their weaknesses and imperfections. We see them not in the future, except through the past. We see them not in Heaven, without some intrusions of earth. But infants, so lovely and pleasant in their lives, so untarnished by actual sin, so free from every unpleasant association, they rise before us, in our thoughts of Heaven, the perfection of what was even here lovely. The Beautiful is glorified.

We think of them as infants still, not merely in the type of their bodies, but even in the complexion of their spirits. Their glorification is the perfection of the *childlike*, not the abrogation of it. Whatever all the perfection of their nature may involve, the childlike must still pervade every feature and attribute of their character, and be the soul of their personal identity. We think of infants in Heaven. Why should we think otherwise? Why should we imagine that the childlike must be superseded, in their glorification, when we know it to be the aim of Christianity to restore us to that very character? We are assured that "except we

be converted, and become as little children, we shall not enter into the kingdom of Heaven;" and "whoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein." John, whose heart seems to have been most deeply imbued with the love of the Saviour and the life of Heaven, loves to call Christians, little children. We know, also, that those Christians who are most imbued with the life and love of the Saviour, are the most childlike. In sainted infants, therefore, that which Christianity labors to restore, need only to be perfected. They need not the taking away of a falsely-developed character, but only a glorification of what is at hand. The childlike in nature, becomes perfect as the childlike in grace and in glory.

This view of the subject may probably justify us in the conclusion that, in an important sense, infants enter Heaven with an advantage over adults. We know well how far even good Christians fall short of attaining the childlike in character, in this life. Though the spirits of the just will all be made perfect in Heaven, yet we must allow of a relative perfection — a perfection of "each in his own order" — a perfection not excluding such peculiarities as enter into personal identity — a perfection, in a word, that admits of degrees. While, therefore, we may think of the state of prophets, apostles, martyrs, and prominent saints, as highest in *eminence*, we may think of infants as highest in *LOVELINESS*. We may suppose that the beautiful evolution of their spirits has never been interrupted or marked with blemishes of actual sins, which may, and no doubt

often does, condition in a measure all remedial influences.

There may be sufficient in these considerations to justify the thought: "The smallest planet is nearest the sun. Ye stand nearest to God, ye little ones!" This thought has been suggested in various ways, and beautifully, for the consolation of those who cherish fondly the memory of the "early lost, early saved." An unknown poet has beautifully spoken thus:

Nearest to God in childhood! It is true,

For then the heart wears not the deepened stain

That after years bear to it; morn's sweet dew

Has not yet sought in the blue sky, again,
Its first fair home;—Hope's sunshine is unshaded,
Joy's opening blossoms have not drooped or faded;
Life's verdant paths have not been sadly trod
By weary feet! the heart is near to God.

Yes, ye are near to God, ye little ones!

Nearer than those whose bright eyes have grown dim
With bitter tears—to whose sad heart there comes

No day unmarked by suffering and sin.
Ye have not found, amid earth's blooming bowers,
Shadows with sunbeams blended, thorns with flowers;
Ye sport in sinless mirth on the green sod
'Neath the blue sky;—yes, ye are near to God!

To this we may add a translation of the beautiful parable of Herder, entitled "Early Death."

Early in the morning a damsel went into the garden to gather for herself a wreath of beautiful roses. She saw before her only buds, closed and half-open, suffused with dew, fresh and fragrant.

"Not yet will I pluck you," said the damsel. "I will wait till the genial sun opens your bosoms, then ye will smile in lovelier tints, and breathe a sweeter odor."

She came again at noon, and behold! — the worm had revelled in the open roses, the sun had faded them, and they looked languid, lifeless, and pale! The maiden wept! The next morning she gathered her flowers early. * * *

Those children whom God loves best, he gathers early out of this life, before sin smites them — before its blight touches their hearts. The paradise of children is a high stage in the heavenly blessedness. The most righteous adult cannot attain to it, because his spirit has received deeper stains of sin.

Those who receive richest grace will receive highest glory. With this thought in his mind, who can fail to feel a sweet force in the touching stanza of Ralph Erskine :

Babes thither caught from womb and breast,
Claimed right to sing above the rest ;
Because they found the happy shore,
They never saw nor sought before.

The thought of infants in Heaven becomes peculiarly pleasant when we contrast the substantial and enduring bliss which they have attained, with the fleeting and empty joys of earth. What, after all, is there here that has any value, except as it stands related to the higher and longer life to come ?

What is this passing scene ?
A peevish April day !
A little sun—a little rain,
And then night sweeps along the plain,
And all things fade away.
Man, soon discussed,
Yields up his trust,
And all his hopes and fears
Lie with him in the dust !

The only worthy motive any one can have at all, in desiring to remain here, is to do good; but if God sees proper in mercy to relieve any of our race from the toils and responsibilities of earth, by taking them to Heaven in infancy, we should glory in His grace. They leave their loved ones without the pangs of parting. They yield to the embraces of death, without knowing that it is a penalty. They lie down in the grave without any thoughts of its loneliness. They enter the eternal world without any dread of its retrIBUTions. They fly back to the bosom of their Father, with the same innocent confidence as they were wont to fall into the arms of their earthly parents. So are they ever with the Lord! They have obtained rest without weariness — they have been victorious without a conflict—they are saved without a probation. Yes, my happy child,

God took thee in His mercy,
A lamb untasked, untried;
He fought for thee,
He gained the victory,
And thou art glorified.

Our infants in Heaven are free from the dreadful uncertainty of final salvation which hangs over those who live to years of accountability. In the case of many, no doubt the Kingdom of Heaven would not be of them, were they not taken away in infancy. This is especially true of the children of parents who are not themselves heirs of Heaven. Such children, if they live to adult age, have no earthly assurance that they shall ever reach the happy shore. As babes, they lie in the arms of the heirs of hell! As children,

they have their powers unfolded in the bosom of a family where there is no heavenly element. As youths, they have no sweet religious memories to bind them, as by a thousand tender inward cords, to those most powerful centres of attraction—Mother, Home, and Heaven! As men and women, they can never know God by the most attractive and moving of all His names: “The God of their fathers!” Still later in life, when their parents have passed away, they cannot be drawn to their graves by that holy recollection, which is infinitely stronger than any that lives in mere human affection, and which will constrain them to repeat, with tearful longings, and with humble hope,

The child of parents passed into the skies!

Oh! how much better off would those children be than they now are, or perhaps ever will be, were their graves just now but a few feet long by the side of their parents! Most truly may we repeat, over the newly-made grave of every infant, the touching words of the Poet:

When the Archangel's trump shall blow,
And souls to bodies join,
Millions shall wish their lives below
Had been as short as thine!

How much safer are they in the Heavenly Home than they would be in such impious homes of earth! Experience proves that, in many cases, even the children of pious parents, first wander, then despise, and at last perish. Such is the power of sin in their own hearts, acted upon by the fierce temptations which assail them from without. We cannot know the future history of

our children, in a world like this. We do know their history when they are taken away. Oh, what a history of endless blessedness lies before them in that happy, happy world, to which a kind Saviour has removed them! We ought, instead of mourning like those who have no hope, to clap our hands in humble joy, when their beautiful wax-like figures lie before us in the shroud, and afford us the plainest assurance that their sainted spirits are now among the white-robed, palm-bearing hosts of the infants redeemed!

Who can ask a richer consolation than this? What can parents ask more than that their infants should be in Heaven? The feelings which become them, when they for the last time draw near the coffin of the infant sleeper, and lay their warm hands once more, as an affectionate farewell, upon its brow, are beautifully expressed by one who himself experienced the “sweet sorrow.” We will speak out of his heart, rather than out of our own mind:

“Now, farewell, my precious boy! Till I see thee again, farewell! With a saddened heart have I performed the last act of earthly love, and now I resign thee into the hands of higher and better parental care. Short was thy visit in this rough and tempestuous world! the heavenly gardener has early transplanted the fragrant lily of thy life into a milder and purer clime. Thy life was not yet darkened and embittered by the fearful curse of sin and death. As a tender lamb of Christ, thou didst bear thy cross in friendly innocence, like the infants of Bethlehem, who were slain by the tyrant-sword of Herod, as the first martyr-fruits offered to the new-born Saviour, to whom the ancient church

has devoted the third day after Christmas as an anniversary-day of special remembrance. Thou art now happy with them, and with the pleasant angels, far away from the sultry and sickly atmosphere of earth and sin, in serene celestial heights, in the green peaceful bowers of Paradise, led, and fed, and refreshed, by the Great Shepherd of the sheep and of the lambs, who was Himself once a child, that He might sanctify the tender age of infancy, and who, in the days of His flesh, pressed infants to His bosom, speaking those words of comfort : ‘Suffer little children to come to me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.’ His thou wert by birth, and to Him we consecrated thee in holy Baptism ; and, as He formed thy beautiful body, so did he also, by His Holy Spirit, quietly, and unconsciously to thee, early prepare thy spirit for that holy world where now thou art at home. It was He that taught thee to lisp, as thou didst in the midst of thy suffering, with infant joy : ‘Heaven is a beautiful place — God is there — Christ is there — the angels are there — all good people are there !’ Yes, my hopeful, pious boy ! they are all there, old and young, great and small — all who have overcome in the blood of the Lamb ! There also dost thou bloom for ever, in the unfading beauty of the loveliest age ! Thither also do thy parents, by God’s grace, hope to come, when their hour shall strike, to embrace thee, the beloved of their hearts, in glorified youth, and to lose thee no more for ever ! O the joy of such a meeting ! ” *

* Rev. Dr. Schaff, in the *Kirchenfreund* of April, 1853, article, “The Young Martyr”; which see, for a touching

The thought of infants in Heaven is not only pleasant, so far as it assures us that their safety and happiness are secured, but it is also profitable as it relates to us who remain behind — perhaps remain behind in our sins ! It is a moving reflection that we have flesh of our flesh, and bone of our bone, in Heaven ! “What a mercy, if the death of the child prove the life of the parent !” This has been the case — it ought always to be so. It is God’s design to make it so. The hearts of parents are most successfully approached through their children ; and hence He seeks to draw them to Himself by this cord. Dr. Payson has beautifully said : “When a shepherd finds the sheep unwilling to enter the fold, he sometimes takes up the lambs, and places them within, when their dams will follow.” So the heavenly Shepherd, when parents will not come to Him, He takes a babe from their bosom, in order to allure their hearts toward that bright world on high into which He carries their treasure.

Oh, how does the sinful heart of parents melt to penitence at the thought of a sainted child ! Like the publican, they stand afar off, feeling as if their guilty eyes dare scarcely gaze into that holy place, into which bright angels have borne their beloved offspring ! Here is the language of their stricken hearts :

account of eight weeks’ almost unparalleled suffering on the part of a child only about two and a half years of age, from the hull of a chestnut in its windpipe. The operation of *tracheotomy* having been performed, the little sufferer breathed through the incision for three weeks ! During his sufferings, as if by presentiment of his speedy release, he said, in allusion to a child’s hymn which he had been taught: “Ma, Ma, I will fly up, up, up to Heaven, like a ‘little diamond in the sky.’”

"Thou bright and star-like spirit!
That in my visions wild,
I see, 'mid Heaven's seraphic host,
O! canst thou be my child?

My God, to call me homeward,
His only son sent down,
And now, still more to tempt my heart,
Has taken up my own!"

If of such as once blessed our hearth and home the heavenly company is composed, is it not a moving reason why we ourselves should be pious? Or does any parent desire, that the sad look cast upon the peaceful countenance of his infant, under the half-open coffin-lid, shall be the last gaze for ever? Yet, so it *may* be—yea, so it *will* be, except the parent is pious, or will become such. Without an interest in Jesus Christ, we shall never see Him, nor any of that infant band, among whom are our own in joy and felicity. Oh! how can a parent sin on, and neglect his soul, while part of his own family are walking in white robes, bearing palms in their hands, and singing the song of the redeemed in the upper sanctuary? Can any parents refuse to love that Saviour who, in Heaven, leads forth that company of infant saints, among whom are some taken from their own bosoms? O my Saviour, what madness is this!

It is not unscriptural to say that they plead—plead that the remainder of the household band may come to them. If the rich man, in the regions of the lost, asked that a messenger might be sent to his "five brethren," to warn them not to come to that place, may we not, with almost infinitely greater reason,

believe that the blest are equally anxious for the safe arrival there of those that they have left behind ! Yes, they plead in the silent eloquence of their love and loveliness ! In the sentiment of a dying Indian mother, who, when they sought to restore her to the hope and love of life, exclaimed : "No ! no ! my four children recall me. I see them by the side of the Great Spirit. They stretch out their arms to me, and are astonished that I do not join them !"

Hark ! heard ye not a sound
Sweeter than wild-bird's note, or minstrel's lay ?
I know that music well, for night and day
I hear it echoing round.

It is the tuneful chime
Of spirit voices !—'tis my infant band
Calling the mourner from this darkened land
To joy's unclouded clime.

My beautiful, my blest !
I see them there, by the Great Spirit's throne ;
With winning words, and fond beseeching tone
They woo me to my rest.

Who can fully estimate the measure of attractive power which sainted infants hold over the families of earth ? Like myriads of stars in the quiet holy night, they dawn down soft mellow rays of attractive love upon this dark world. Think that the one half of our race die in infancy, and that, consequently, on an average, one half of every family on earth are in Heaven as infants ! Their love dawns down, while the love of myriads of hearts rises up to their high

thrones. The holy influence of their love touches, not single hearts, but the hearts of parents, grand-parents, brothers, sisters, and near favorite friends, of which little children always have many! Think, too, that their memories speak no uncertain language—they point those left behind only to Heaven, and they point direct to Heaven. All know and believe that there is their home.

They exert their influence, too, at the most favorable time. Immediately after bereavement, when the hearts of those left behind are yet tender from the wound. Afterwards, in every lonely and distressful hour, they woo the heart silently and sweetly away toward that land where there is no more sorrow. Often, too, over a long period of years, does the influence of their attractive love follow those who are sad for their early removal from their hearts and homes. For

'Tis a work
Of many a dark hour, and of many a prayer,
To bring the heart back from an infant gone!

Still more tenderly is their influence felt when one or other of the parents, brothers, or sisters, draws down toward the gate of death; how strong and pleasant is the allurement from the other side! Oh! how like a ray from Heaven, in that hour, is the thought of the dying one: "I shall go to them!"

Besides, does not every object in the house, and around us, bring to us thoughts of our infants in Heaven? We see them again, when a hasty search-errand to the drawer, exposes to our view the clothes and play-things which they have left behind. We close it,

and weep as we go away ! We miss them everywhere. We see them everywhere ; and, yet again, they are not there — but in Heaven ! Thither they direct our thoughts, and then fill them with their own loved image.

We never look up with a vow to the sky,
But a light, like their beauty, is there ;
And we hear a low murmur, like theirs, in reply,
When we pour out our spirit in prayer.

“Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not : for of such is the kingdom of Heaven.” Oh, blessed Saviour ! what words are these ! What a motive to resignation ! — there are many little children in Heaven, and there are many more in the Church on earth that will be in Heaven at last, therefore suffer yours to come ! We will humbly and joyfully obey the Saviour, and yield to the motive. Those that are still with us on earth we will train for Heaven. Those already there — shall we bring them back again ? We shall go to them, but they shall not return to us !

Yes, we will go to them — if we are pious ! We will see them in Heaven — if we get there ourselves ! If we are pious — yet a little while, and we shall be with them ! If we are not pious — yet a little while, and we shall see them no more for ever !

THE REAPER AND THE FLOWERS.

There is a reaper, whose name is Death,
And with his sickle keen
He reaps the bearded grain at a breath,
And the flowers that grow between.

"Shall I have nought that is fair?" saith he—
 "Have nought but the bearded grain?
Though the breath of these flowers is sweet to me,
 I will give them all back again."

He gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
 He kissed their drooping leaves;
It was for the Lord of Paradise
 He bound them in his sheaves.

"My Lord hath need of the flowerets gay,"
 The reaper said, and smiled;
"Dear tokens of the earth are they,
 Where He was once a child.

"They shall all bloom in fields of light,
 Transplanted by my care;
And saints upon their garments white
 These sacred blossoms wear."

And the Mother gave, in tears and pain,
 The flowers she most did love;
She knew she would find them all again
 In the fields of light above.

O, not in cruelty, not in wrath,
 The reaper came that day;
'Twas an angel visited the green earth,
 And took the flowers away.

PROF. LONGFELLOW.

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